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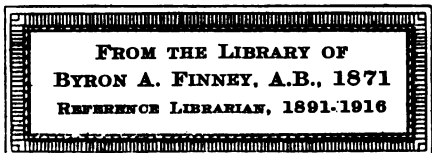
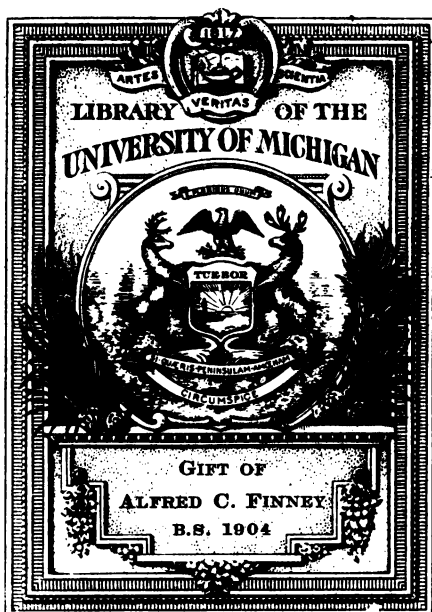
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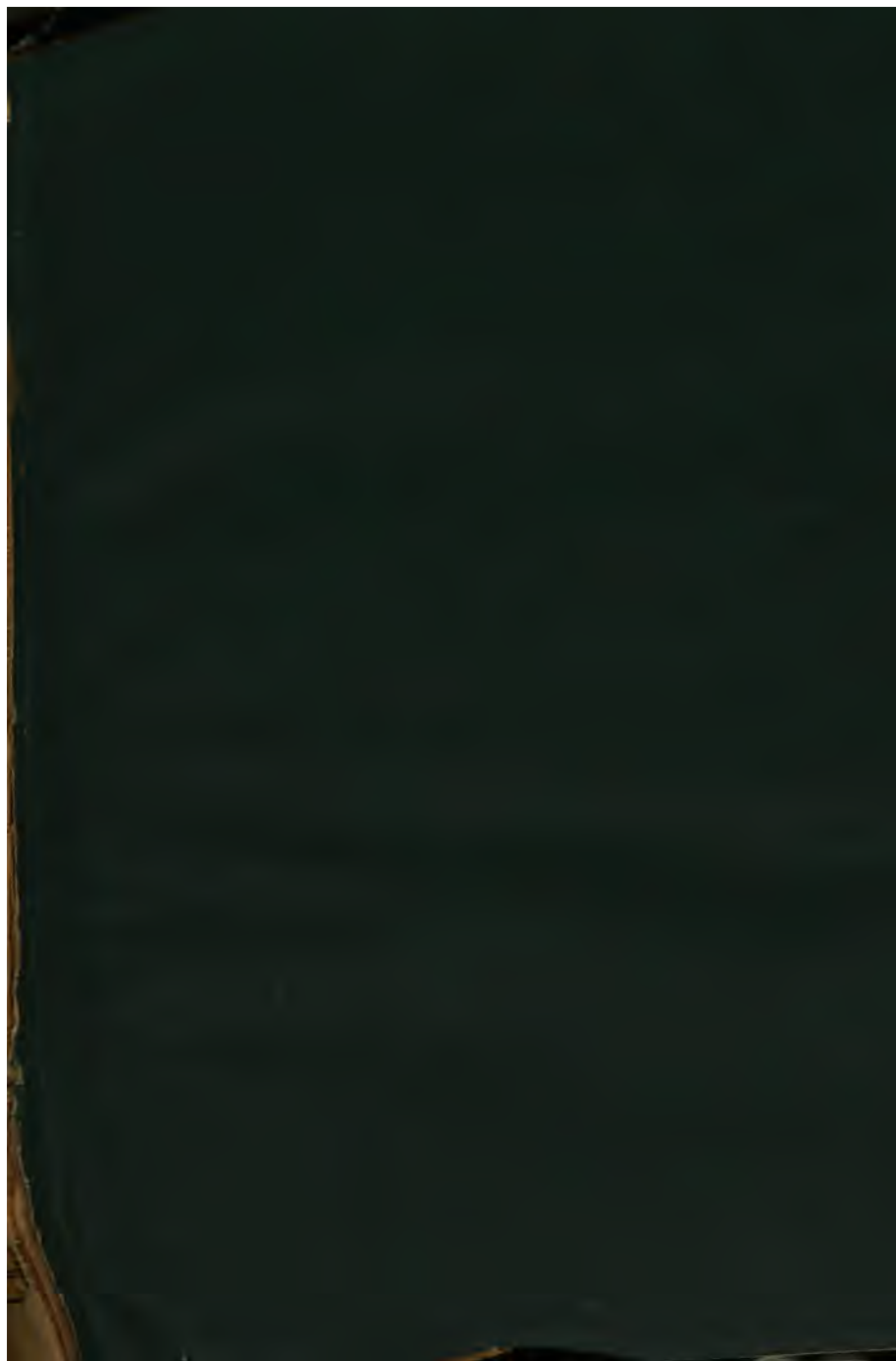
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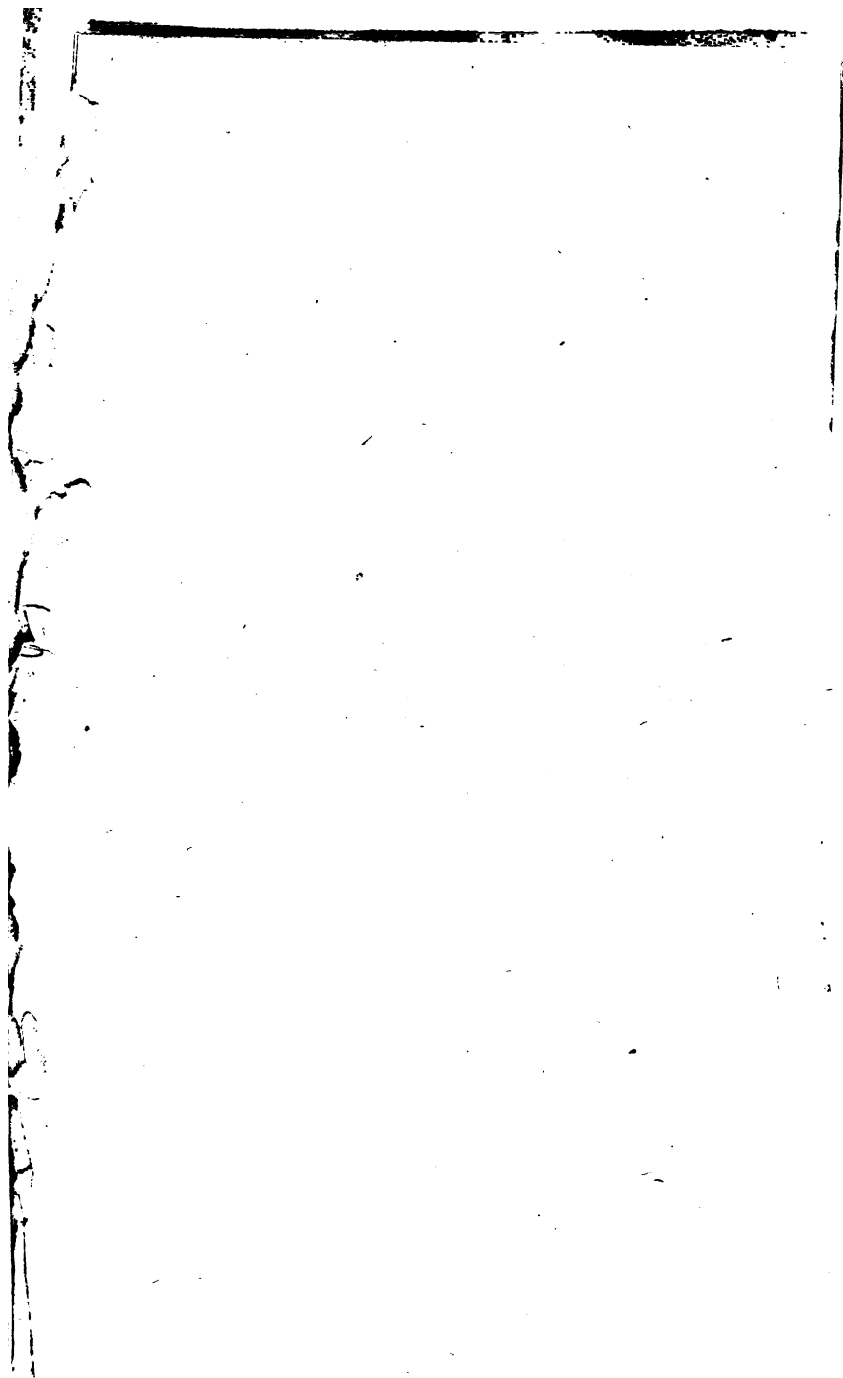
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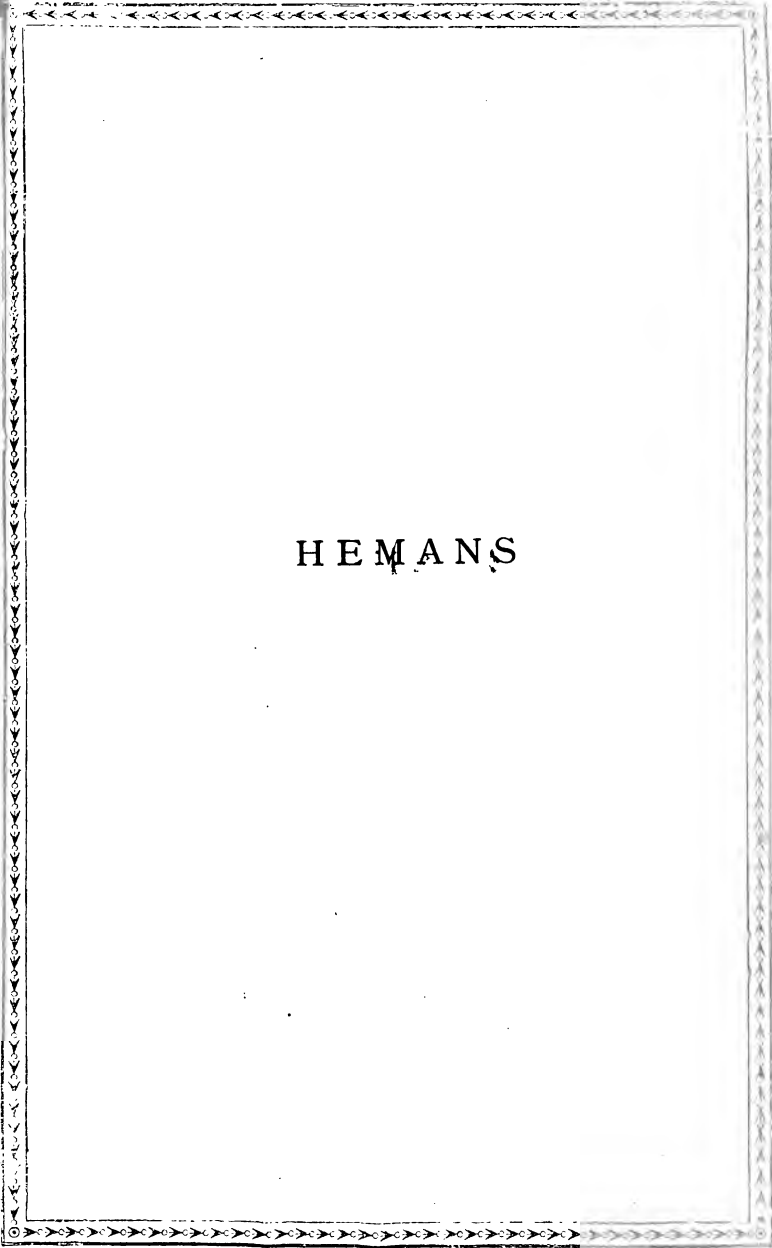






To my wife
Ida C. Finney
From her husband
B. A. Finney

Ann Arbor,
Dec. 25th 1892.



HEMANS



CASABIANCA.

"The boy stood on the burning deck,
Whence all but he had fled,"

[p. 237.]

Frontispiece.]

POEMS

BY

MRS. HEMANS, *Felicity
Korathia (Brown)*

WITH 41 ILLUSTRATIONS BY HAL LUDLOW AND
G. G. KILBURN



LONDON
GEORGE ROUTLEDGE AND SONS
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NEW YORK: 9 LAFAYETTE PLACE

1885

UNIFORM WITH THIS VOLUME.



SHAKSPERE.

WORDSWORTH.

LONGFELLOW.

SCOTT.

MOORE.

BURNS.

**THE HOME AFFECTIONS POUR-
TRAYED BY THE POETS.**

SACRED POETRY.

Gift of A. C. Finney
 Added ed.
 3-28-41

828
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 1885



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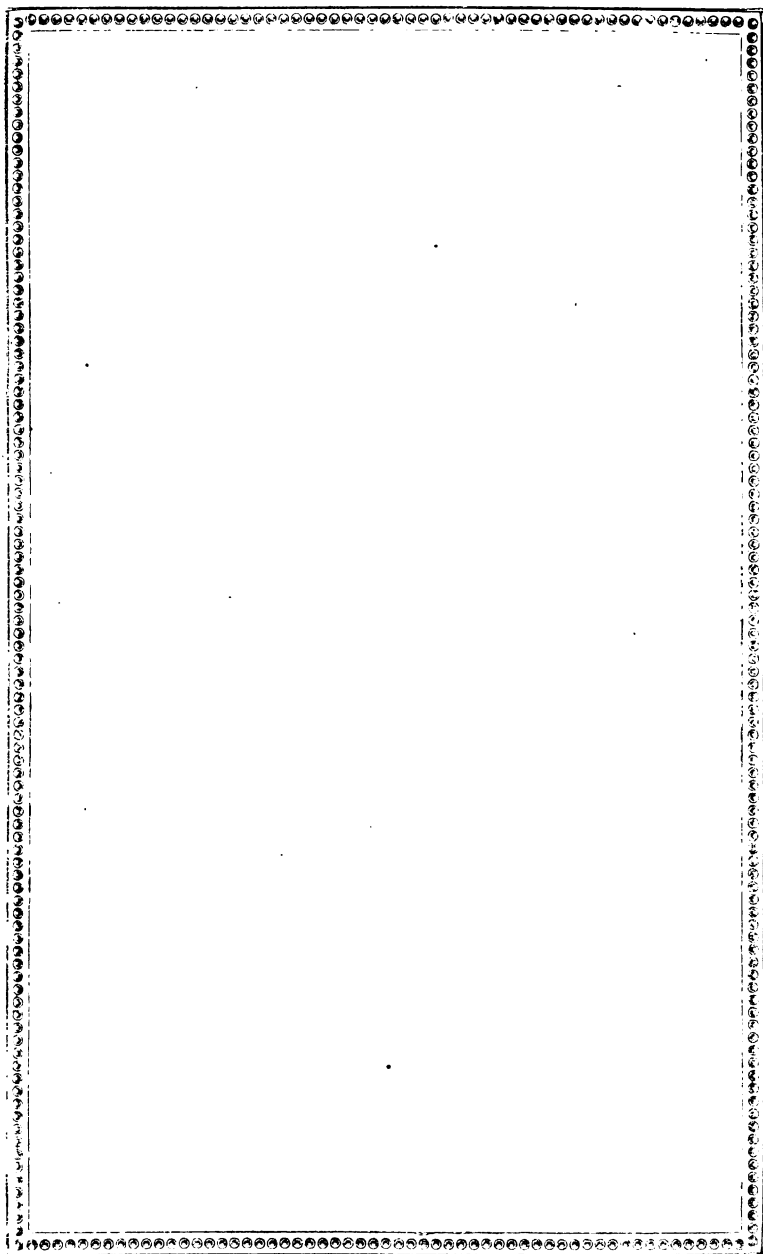
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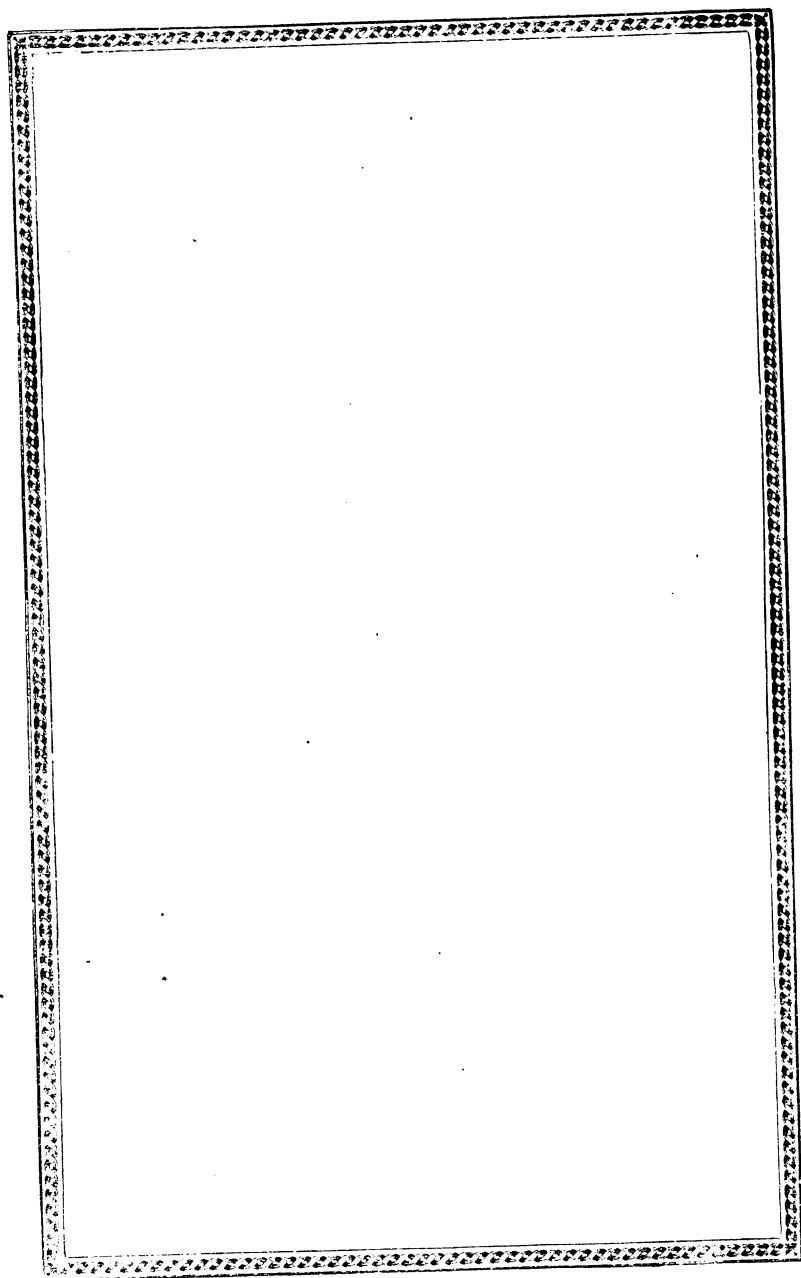
THE LAST CONSTANTINE.



“Thou strivest nobly,
When hearts of sterner stuff perhaps had sunk :
And o’er thy fall, if it be so decreed,
Good men will mourn, and brave men will shed tears.

Fame I look not for ;
But to sustain, in Heaven’s all-seeing eye,
Before my fellow-men, in mine own sight,
With graceful virtue and becoming pride,
The dignity and honour of a man.
Thus station’d as I am, I will do all
That man may do.”

MISS BAILLIE’S *Constantine Palæologus*





THE LAST CONSTANTINE.

I.

THE fires grew pale on Rome's deserted shrine,
In the dim grot the Pythia's voice had died ;
—Shout, for the City of the Constantines,
The rising city of the billow-side,
The City of the Cross !—great Ocean's bride,
Crown'd from her birth she sprang ! Long ages pass'd,
And still she look'd in glory o'er the tide,
Which at her feet barbaric riches cast,
Pour'd by the burning East, all joyously and fast.

II.

Long ages pass'd !—they left her porphyry halls
Still trod by kingly footsteps. Gems and gold
Broider'd her mantle, and her castled walls
Frown'd in their strength ; yet there were signs which told
The days were full. The pure high faith of old
Was changed ; and on her silken couch of sleep
She lay, and murmur'd if a rose-leaf's fold
Disturb'd her dreams ; and call'd her slaves to keep
Their watch, that no rude sound might reach her o'er the deep.

The Last Constantine.

III.

But there are sounds that from the regal dwelling
 Free hearts and fearless only may exclude ;
 'Tis not alone the wind at midnight swelling,
 Breaks on the soft repose by Luxury woo'd !
 There are unbidden footsteps, which intrude
 Where the lamps glitter, and the wine-cup flows,
 And darker hues have stain'd the marble, strew'd
 With the fresh myrtle and the short-lived rose,
 And Parian walls have rung to the dread march of foes.

IV.

A voice of multitudes is on the breeze,
 Remote, yet solemn as the night-storm's roar
 Through Ida's giant pines ! Across the seas
 A murmur comes, like that the deep winds bore
 From Tempè's haunted river to the shore
 Of the reed-crown'd Eurotas ; when, of old,
 Dark Asia sent her battle-myrriads o'er
 Th' indignant wave which would not be controll'd,
 But, past the Persian's chain, in boundless freedom roll'd.

V.

And it is thus again !—Swift oars are dashing
 The parted waters, and a light is cast
 On their white foam-wreaths, from the sudden flashing
 Of Tartar spears, whose ranks are thickening fast.
 There swells a savage trumpet on the blast,
 A music of the deserts, wild and deep,
 Wakening strange echoes, as the shores are past
 Where low, midst Iliou's dust, her conquerors sleep,
 O'ershadowing with high names each rude sepulchral heap.

VI.

Wax from the West !—the snows on Thracian hills
 Are loosed by Spring's warm breath ; yet o'er the lands
 Which Hæmus girds, the chainless mountain rills
 Pour down less swiftly than the Moslem bands.
 War from the East !—midst Araby's lone sands,
 More lonely now the few bright founts may be,
 While Ismael's bow is bent in warrior-hands
 Against the Golden City of the sea :
 —Oh ! for a soul to fire thy dust, Thermopylæ !

VII.

Hear yet again, ye mighty !—Where are they,
Who, with their green Olympic garlands crown'd,
Leap'd up, in proudly beautiful array,
As to a banquet gathering, at the sound
Of Persia's clarion?—Far and joyous round,
From the pine-forests, and the mountain-snows,
And the low sylvan valleys, to the bound
Of the bright waves, at Freedom's voice they rose !
—Hath it no thrilling tone to break the tomb's repose ?

VIII.

They slumber with their swords !—The olive-shades
In vain are whispering their immortal tale !
In vain the spirit of the past pervades
The soft winds, breathing through each Grecian vale.
—Yet must *Thou* wake, though all unarm'd and pale,
Devoted City !—Lo ! the Moslem's spear,
Red from its vintage, at thy gates ; his sail
Upon thy waves, his trumpet in thine ear !
—Awake ! and summon those who yet, perchance, may hear !

IX.

Be hush'd, thou faint and feeble voice of weeping !
Lift ye the banner of the Cross on high,
And call on chiefs, whose noble sires are sleeping
In their proud graves of sainted chivalry,
Beneath the palms and cedars, where they sigh
To Syrian gales !—The sons of each brave line,
From their baronial halls shall hear your cry,
And seize the arms which flash'd round Salem's shrine,
And wield for you the swords once waved for Palestine !

X.

All still ! all voiceless !—and the billow's roar
Alone replies !—Alike *their* soul is gone,
Who shared the funeral-feast on *Æta's* shore,
And *theirs*, that o'er the field of Ascalon
Swell'd the crusader's hymn !—Then gird thou on
Thine armour, Eastern Queen ! and meet the hour
Which waits thee ere the day's fierce work is done
With a strong heart ; so may thy helmet tower
Unshiver'd through the storm, for generous hope is power !

The Last Constantine.

XI.

But linger not,—array thy men of might !
 The shores, the seas, are peopled with thy foes.
 Arms through thy cypress-groves are gleaming bright,
 And the dark huntsmen of the wild, repose
 Beneath the shadowy marble porticoes
 Of thy proud villas. Nearer and more near,
 Around thy walls the sons of battle close ;
 Each hour, each moment, hath its sound of fear,
 Which the deep grave alone is charter'd not to hear.

XII.

Away ! bring wine, bring odours to the shade,²
 Where the tall pine and poplar blend on high !
 Bring roses, exquisite, but soon to fade !
 Snatch every brief delight,—since we must die !—
 Yet is the hour, degenerate Greeks ! gone by,
 For feast in vine-wreath'd bower, or pillar'd hall ;
 Dim gleams the torch beneath yon fiery sky,
 And deep and hollow is the tambour's call,
 And from the startled hand th' untasted cup will fall.

XIII.

The night, the glorious oriental night,
 Hath lost the silence of her purple heaven,
 With its clear stars ! The red artillery's light,
 Athwart her worlds of tranquil splendour driven,
 To the still firmament's expanse hath given
 Its own fierce glare, wherein each cliff and tower
 Starts wildly forth ; and now the air is riven
 With thunder-bursts, and now dull smoke-clouds low'r,
 Veiling the gentle moon, in her most hallow'd hour.

XIV.

Sounds from the waters, sounds upon the earth,
 Sounds in the air—of battle ! Yet with these
 A voice is mingling, whose deep tones give birth
 To Faith and Courage ! From luxurious ease
 A gallant few have started ! O'er the seas,
 From the Seven Towers,³ their banner waves its sign,
 And Hope is whispering in the joyous breeze,
 Which plays amidst its folds. That voice was *thine* ,
 Thy soul was on that band, devoted Constantine !

The Last Constantine.

7

XV.

Was Rome thy parent ? Didst thou catch from her
The fire that lives in thine undaunted eye ?
—That city of the throne and sepulchre
Hath given proud lessons how to reign and die !
Heir of the Cæsars ! did that lineage high,
Which, as a triumph to the grave, hath pass'd
With its long march of sceptred imag'ry,
Th' heroic mantle o'er thy spirit cast ?
—Thou, of an eagle race the noblest and the last !

XVI.

Vain dreams ! upon that spirit hath descended
Light from the living Fountain, whence each thought
Springs pure and holy ! In that eye is blended
A spark, with earth's triumphal memories fraught,
And, far within, a deeper meaning, caught
From worlds unseen. A hope, a lofty trust,
Whose resting-place on buoyant wing is sought
(Though through its veil, seen darkly from the dust,)
In realms where Time no more hath power upon the just.

XVII.

Those were proud days, when on the battle-plain,
And in the sun's bright face, and midst th' array
Of awe-struck hosts, and circled by the slain,
The Roman cast his glittering mail away,
And, while a silence, as of midnight, lay
O'er breathless thousands, at his voice who started,
Call'd on the unseen, terrific powers that sway
The heights, the depths, the shades ; then, fearless-hearted,
Girt on his robe of death, and for the grave departed.

XVIII.

But then, around him as the javelins rush'd,
From earth to heaven swell'd up the loud acclaim ;
And, ere his heart's last free libation gush'd,
With a bright smile the warrior caught his name,
Far-floating on the winds ! And Vict'ry came,
And made the hour of that immortal deed
A life, in fiery feeling ! Valour's aim
Had sought no loftier guerdon. Thus to bleed,
Was to be Rome's high star !—He died—and had his meed

XIX.

But praise—and dearer, holier praise, be theirs,
 Who, in the stillness and the solitude
 Of hearts press'd earthwards by a weight of cares,
 Uncheer'd by Fame's proud hope (th' ethereal food
 Of restless energies), and only view'd
 By Him whose eye, from His eternal throne,
 Is on the soul's dark places, have subdued
 And vow'd themselves, with strength till then unknown.
 To some high martyr-task, in secret and alone.

XX.

Theirs be the bright and sacred names enshrined
 Far in the bosom ! for their deeds belong,
 Not to the gorgeous faith which charm'd mankind
 With its rich pomp of festival and song,
 Garland, and shrine, and incense-bearing throng ;
 But to that Spirit, hallowing, as it tries
 Man's hidden soul in whispers, yet more strong
 Than storm or earthquake's voice ; for *thence* arise
 All that mysterious world's unseen sublimities.

XXI.

Well might *thy* name, brave Constantine ! awake
 Such thought, such feeling !—But the scene again
 Bursts on my vision, as the day-beams break
 Thro' the red sulphurous mists : the camp, the plain,
 The terraced palaces, the dome-capt fane,
 With its bright cross fix'd high in crowning grace ;
 Spears on the ramparts, galleys on the main,
 And, circling all with arms, that turban'd race—
 The sun, the desert, stamp'd in each dark, haughty face.

XXII.

Shout, ye seven hills ! I.o ! Christian pennons streaming
 Red o'er the waters !⁶ Hail, deliverers, hail !
 Along your billowy wake the radiance gleaming,
 Is Hope's own smile ! They crowd the swelling sail,
 On, with the foam, the sunbeam, and the gale,
 Borne, as a victor's car ! The batteries pour
 Their clouds and thunders ; but the rolling veil
 Of smoke floats up th' exulting winds before !
 —And oh ! the glorious burst of that bright sea and shore !

XXIII.

The rocks, waves, ramparts, Europe's, Asia's coast,
All throng'd !—one theatre for kingly war !
A monarch girt with his barbaric host,
Points o'er the beach his flashing scymetar !
Dark tribes are tossing javelins from afar,
Hands waving banners o'er each battlement ;
Decks, with their serried guns, array'd to bar
The promised aid ; but hark ! a shout is sent
Up from the noble barks !—the Moslem line is rent !

XXIV.

On, on thro' rushing flame and arrowy shower,
The welcome prows have cleft their rapid way,
And, with the shadows of the vesper-hour,
Furl'd their white sails, and anchor'd in the bay.
Then were the streets with song and torch-fire gay,
Then the Greek wines flow'd mantling in the light
Of festal halls ; and there was joy !—the ray
Of dying eyes, a moment wildly bright—
The sunset of the soul, ere lost to mortal sight !

XXV.

For, vain that feeble succour ! Day by day
Th' imperial towers are crumbling, and the sweep
Of the vast engines, in their ceaseless play,
Comes powerful, as when heaven unbinds the deep !
—Man's heart is mightier than the castled steep,
Yet will it sink when earthly hope is fled ;
Man's thoughts work darkly in such hours, and sleep
Flies far ; and in *their* mien the walls who tread,
Things by the brave untold may fearfully be read !

XXVI.

It was a sad and solemn task to hold
Their midnight-watch on that beleaguer'd wall !
As the sea-wave beneath the bastions roll'd,
A sound of fate was in its rise and fall !
The heavy clouds were as an empire's pall,
The giant-shadows of each tower and fane
Lay like the grave's ; a low mysterious call
Breathed in the wind, and from the tented plain
A voice of omens rose, with each wild martial strain

The Last Constantine.

XXVII.

For they might catch the Arab charger's neighing,
 The Thracian drum, the Tartar's drowsy song ;
 Might almost hear the Soldan's banner swaying,
 The watch-word mutter'd in some Eastern tongue.
 Then flash'd the gun's terrific light along
 The marble streets, all stillness—not repose ;
 And boding thoughts came o'er them, dark and strong :
 For heaven, earth, air, speak auguries to those
 Who see their number'd hours fast pressing to the close.

XXVIII.

But strength is from the mightiest ! There is one
 Still in the breach and on the rampart seen,
 Whose cheek shows paler with each morning sun,
 And tells, in silence, how the night hath been,
 In kingly halls, a vigil : yet serene
 The ray set deep within his thoughtful eye,
 And there is that in his collected mien,
 To which the hearts of noble men reply,
 With fires, partaking not this frame's mortality !

XXIX.

Yes ! call it not of lofty minds the fate,
 To pass o'er earth in brightness, but alone ;
 High power was made their birthright, to create
 A thousand thoughts responsive to their own !
 A thousand echoes of their spirit's tone
 Start into life, where'er their path may be,
 Still following fast ; as when the wind hath blown
 O'er Indian groves, ' a wanderer wild and free,
 Kindling and bearing flames afar from tree to tree !

XXX.

And it is thus with thee ! Thy lot is cast
 On evil days, thou Cæsar ! Yet the few
 That set their generous bosoms to the blast
 Which rocks thy throne—the fearless and the true,
 Bear hearts wherein thy glance can still renew
 The free devotion of the years gone by,
 When from bright dreams th' ascendant Roman drew
 Enduring strength ! States vanish—ages fly—
 But leave one task unchanged—to suffer and to die !

XXXI.

These are our nature's heritage. But thou,
The crown'd with empire ! thou wert call'd to share
A cup more bitter. On thy fever'd brow
The semblance of that buoyant hope to wear
Which long had pass'd away ; alone to bear
The rush and pressure of dark thoughts, that came
As a strong billow in their weight of care ;
And, with all this, to smile !—for earth-born frame
These are stern conflicts ; yet they pass, unknown to Fame !

XXXII.

Her glance is on the triumph, on the field,
On the red scaffold ; and where'er, in sight
Of human eyes, the human soul is steel'd
To deeds that seem as of immortal might,
Yet are proud Nature's ! But her meteor-light
Can pierce no depths, no clouds ; it falls not where,
In silence, and in secret, and in night,
The noble heart doth wrestle with despair,
And rise more strong than death from its unwitness'd prayer.

XXXIII.

Men have been firm in battle : they have stood
With a prevailing hope on ravaged plains,
And won the birthright of their hearths with blood,
And died rejoicing, midst their ancient fanes,
That so their children, undefiled with chains,
Might worship there in peace. But they that stand
When not a beacon o'er the wave remains,
Link'd but to perish with a ruin'd land,
Where Freedom dies with them—call *these* a martyr-band .

XXXIV.

But the world heeds them not. Or if, perchance,
Upon their strife it bend a careless eye,
It is but as the Roman's stoic glance
Fell on that stage where man's last agony
Was made *his* sport, who, knowing *one* must die,
Reck'd not *which* champion ; but prepared the strain,
And bound the bloody wreath of victory,
To greet the conqueror ; while, with calm disdain,
The vanquish'd proudly met the doom he met in vain.

The Last Constantine.

XXXV.

The hour of Fate comes on ! and it is fraught
 With *this* of Liberty, that now the need
 Is past to veil the brow of anxious thought,
 And clothe the heart, which still beneath must bleed,
 With Hope's fair-seeming drapery. We are freed
 From tasks like these by Misery ; one alone
 Is left the brave, and rest shall be thy meed,
 Prince, watcher, wearied one ! when thou hast shown
 How brief the cloudy space which parts the grave and throne !

XXXVI.

The signs are full. They are not in the sky,
 Nor in the many voices of the air,
 Nor the swift clouds. No fiery hosts on high
 Toss their wild spears : no meteor-banners glare,
 No comet fiercely shakes its blazing hair,
 And yet the signs are full : too truly seen
 In the thinn'd ramparts, in the pale despair
 Which lends one language to a people's mien,
 And in the ruin'd heaps where walls and towers have been !

XXXVII.

It is a night of beauty ; such a night
 As, from the sparry grot or laurel-shade,
 Or wave in marbled cavern rippling bright,
 Might woo the nymphs of Grecian fount and glade
 To sport beneath its moonbeams, which pervade
 Their forest-haunts : a night to rove alone,
 Where the young leaves by vernal winds are sway'd,
 And the reeds whisper, with a dreamy tone
 Of melody, that seems to breathe from worlds unknown.

XXXVIII.

A night, to call from green Elysium's bowers
 The shades of elder bards ; a night, to hold
 Unseen communion with th' inspiring powers
 That made deep groves their dwelling-place of old :
 A night, for mourners, o'er the hallow'd mo
 To strew sweet flowers ; for revellers to fill
 And wreath the cup ; for sorrows to be told
 Which love hath cherish'd long ; —vain thoughts, be still !
 —It is a night of fate, stamp'd with Almighty Will !

XXXIX.

It should come sweeping in the storm, and rending
The ancient summits in its dread career !
And with vast billows, wrathfully contending,
And with dark clouds, o'ershadowing every sphere !
—But He, whose footstep shakes the earth with fear,
Passing to lay the sovereign cities low,
Alike in His omnipotence is near
When the soft winds o'er spring's green pathway blow,
And when His thunders cleave the monarch-mountain's brow.

XL.

The heavens in still magnificence look down
On the hush'd Bosphorus, whose ocean-stream
Sleeps, with its paler stars : the snowy crown
Of far Olympus,³ in the moonlight-gleam
Towers radiantly, as when the Pagan's dream
Throng'd it with gods, and bent th' adoring knee !
—But that is past—and now the One Supreme
Fills not alone *those* haunts ; but earth, air, sea,
And Time, which presses on, to finish his decree.

XLI.

Olympus, Ida, Delphi ! ye, the thrones
And temples of a visionary might,
Brooding in clouds above your forest-zones,
And mantling thence the realms beneath with night :
Ye have look'd down on battles ! Fear, and Flight,
And arm'd Revenge, all hurrying past below !
But there is yet a more appalling sight
For earth prepared than e'er, with tranquil brow,
Ye gazed on from your world of solitude and snow !

XLII.

Last night a sound was in the Moslem camp,
And Asia's hills re-echoed to a cry
Of savage mirth !—Wild horn, and war-steeds' tramp,
Blent with the shout of barbarous revelry,
The clash of desert spears ! Last night the sky
A hue of menace and of wrath put on,
Caught from red watch-fires, blazing far and high,
And countless as the flames, in ages gone,
Streaming to heaven's bright queen from shadowy Lebanon !

XLIII.

But all is stillness now. May this be sleep
Which wraps those Eastern thousands? Yes, perchance
Along yon moonlight shore and dark-blue deep,
Bright are their visions with the Houri's glance,
And they behold the sparkling fountains dance
Beneath the bowers of Paradise, that shed
Rich odours o'er the faithful; but the lance,
The bow, the spear, now round the slumberers spread,
Ere Fate fulfil such dreams, must rest beside the dead.

XLIV.

May this be sleep, this hush?—A sleepless eye
Doth hold its vigil midst that dusky race!
One that would scan th' abyss of destiny,
E'en now is gazing on the skies, to trace,
In those bright worlds, the burning isles of space,
Fate's mystic pathway: they the while, serene,
Walk in their beauty; but Mohammed's face
Kindles beneath their aspect,⁹ and his mien,
All fired with stormy joy, by that soft light is seen.

XLV.

Oh! wild presumption of a conqueror's dream,
To gaze on those pure altar-fires, enshrined
In depths of blue infinitude, and deem
They shine to guide the spoiler of mankind
O'er fields of blood!—But with the restless mind
It hath been ever thus; and they that weep
For worlds to conquer, o'er the bounds assign'd
To human search, in daring pride would sweep,
As o'er the trampled dust wherein they soon must sleep.

XLVI.

But ye! that beam'd on Fate's tremendous night,
When the storm burst o'er golden Babylon,
And ye, that sparkled with your wonted light
O'er burning Salem, by the Roman won;
And ye, that calmly view'd the slaughter done
In Rome's own streets, when Alaric's trumpet-blast
Rang through the Capitol; bright spheres! roll on!
Still bright, though empires fall; and bid man cast
His humbled eyes to earth and commune with the past.

XLVII.

For it hath mighty lessons !—from the tomb,
And from the ruins of the tomb, and where,
Midst the wreck'd cities in the desert's gloom,
All tameless creatures make their savage lair—
Thence comes its voice, that shakes the midnight air,
And calls up clouds to dim the laughing day,
And thrills the soul ;—yet bids us not despair,
But make one rock our shelter and our stay,
Beneath whose shade all else is passing to decay !

XLVIII.

The hours move on. I see a wavering gleam
O'er the hush'd waters tremulously fall,
Pour'd from the Cæsars' palace : now the beam
Of many lamps is brightening in the hall,
And from its long arcades and pillars tall
Soft graceful shadows undulating lie
On the wave's heaving bosom, and recall
A thought of Venice, with her moonlight sky,
And festal seas and domes, and fairy pageantry.

XLIX.

But from that dwelling floats no mirthful sound !
The swell of flute and Grecian lyre no more,
Wafting an atmosphere of music round,
Tells the hush'd seaman, gliding past the shore,
How monarchs revel there !—Its feasts are o'er—
Why gleam the lights along its colonnade ?
—I see a train of guests in silence pour
Through its long avenues of terraced shade,
Whose stately founts and bowers for joy alone were made !

L.

In silence, and in arms !—With helm—with sword—
These are no marriage-garments !—Yet e'en now
Thy nuptial feast should grace the regal board,
Thy Georgian bride should wreath her lovely brow
With an imperial diadem !¹⁰—but thou,
O fated prince ! art call'd, and these with thee,
To darker scenes ; and thou hast learn'd to bow
Thine Eastern sceptre to the dread decree,
And count it joy enough to perish—being free !

LI.

On through long vestibules, with solemn tread,
As men, that in some time of fear and woe,
Bear darkly to their rest the noble dead,
O'er whom by day their sorrows may not flow,
The warriors pass : their measured steps are slow,
And hollow echoes fill the marble halls,
Whose long-drawn vistas open as they go,
In desolate pomp ; and from the pictured walls
Sad seems the light itself which on their armour falls !

LII.

And they have reach'd a gorgeous chamber, bright
With all we dream of splendour ; yet a gloom
Seems gather'd o'er it to the boding sight,
A shadow that anticipates the tomb !
Still from its fretted roof the lamps illumine
A purple canopy, a golden throne ;
But it is empty !—Hath the stroke of doom
Fall'n there already ?—Where is He, the One,
Born that high seat to fill, supremely and alone ?

LIII.

Oh ! there are times whose pressure doth efface
Earth's vain distinctions !—when the storm beats loud,
When the strong towers are tottering to their base,
And the streets rock,—who mingle in the crowd ?
—Peasant and chief, the lowly and the proud,
Are in that throng !—Yes, life hath many an hour
Which makes us kindred, by one chast'ning bow'd,
And feeling but, as from the storm we cower,
What shrinking weakness feels before unbounded power !

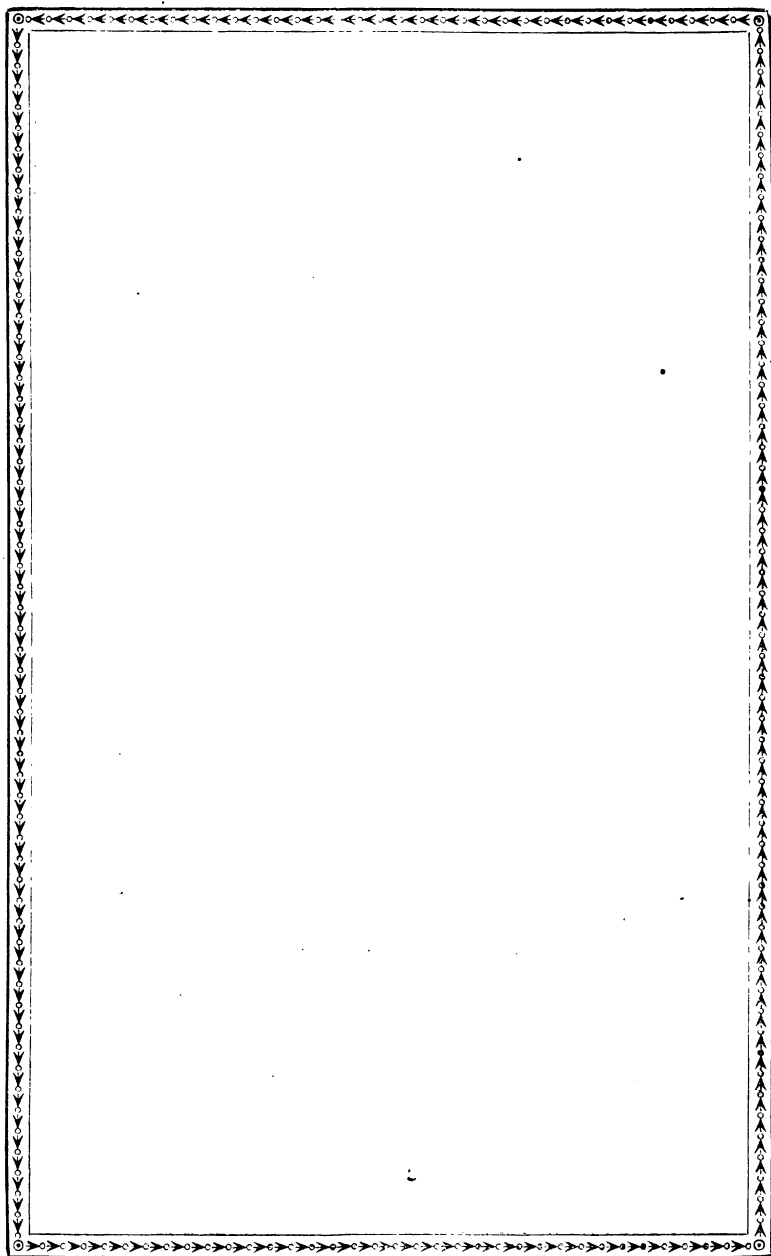
LIV.

Yet then that Power, whose dwelling is on high,
Its loftiest marvels doth reveal, and speak,
In the deep human heart more gloriously,
Than in the bursting thunder !—Thence the weak,
They that seem'd form'd, as flower-stems, but to break
With the first wind, have risen to deeds whose name
Still calls up thoughts that mantle to the cheek,
And thrill the pulse !—Ay, strength no pangs could tame
Hath look'd from woman's eye upon the sword and flame !



"While to soft strains moved forth a band
Of men that moved to die."

[P. 48.



LV.

And this is of such hours !—That throne is void,
And its lord comes, uncrown'd. Behold him stand,
With a calm brow, where woes have not destroy'd
The Greek's heroic beauty, midst his band,
The gather'd virtue of a sinking land,
Alas ! how scanty !—Now is cast aside
All form of princely state ; each noble hand
Is press'd by turns in his : for earthly pride
There is no room in hearts where earthly hope hath died :

LVI.

A moment's hush—and then he speaks—he speaks !
But not of hope ! *that* dream hath long gone by :
His words are full of memory—as he seeks,
By the strong names of Rome and Liberty,
Which yet are living powers that fire the eye,
And rouse the heart of manhood ; and by all
The sad yet grand remembrances that lie
Deep with earth's buried heroes—to recall
The soul of other years, if but to grace their fall !

LVII.

His words are full of faith !—And thoughts, more high
Than Rome ere knew, now fill his glance with light :
Thoughts which give nobler lessons how to die
Than e'er were drawn from Nature's haughty might !
And to that eye, with all the spirit bright,
Have theirs replied in tears, which may not shame
The bravest in such moments !—'Tis a sight
To make all earthly splendours cold and tame,
—That generous burst of soul, with its electric flame !

LVIII.

They weep—those champions of the Cross—they weep,
Yet vow themselves to death !—Ay, midst that train
Are martyrs, privileged in tears to steep
Their lofty sacrifice !—The pang is vain,
And yet its gush of sorrow shall not stain
A warrior's sword.—Those men are strangers here—
The homes they never may behold again
Lie far away, with all things blest and dear,
On laughing shores to which their barks no more shall steer !

The Last Constantine.

LIX.

Know'st thou the land where bloom the orange bowers?
 Where through dark foliage gleam the citron's dyes?¹⁹
 —It is their own. They see their fathers' towers,
 Midst its Hesperian groves in sunlight rise :
 They meet in soul the bright Italian eyes
 Which long and vainly shall explore the main
 For their white sail's return : the melodies
 Of that sweet land are floating o'er their brain—
 Oh ! what a crowded world one moment may contain !

LX.

Such moments come to thousands !—few may die
 Amidst their native shades. The young, the brave,
 The beautiful, whose gladdening voice and eye
 Made summer in a parent's heart, and gave
 Light to their peopled homes ; o'er land and wave
 Are scatter'd fast and far, as rose-leaves fall
 From the deserted stem. They find a grave
 Far from the shadow of th' ancestral hall,
 —A lonely bed is theirs, whose smiles were hope to all !

LXI.

But life flows on, and bears us with its tide,
 Nor may we, lingering, by the slumberers dwell,
 Though they were those once blooming at our side
 In youth's gay home !—Away ! what sound's deep swell
 Comes on the wind ?—It is an empire's knell—
 Slow, sad, majestic, pealing through the night !
 For the last time speaks forth the solemn bell,
 Which calls the Christians to their holiest rite,
 With a funereal voice of solitary might.

LXII.

Again, and yet again !—A startling power
 In sounds like these lives ever ; for they bear,
 Full on remembrance, each eventful hour,
 Chequering life's crowded path. They fill the air
 When conquerors pass, and fearful cities wear
 A mien like joy's ; and when young brides are led
 From their paternal homes ; and when the glare
 Of burning streets, on midnight's cloud, waves red,
 And when the silent house receives its guest—the dead.

LXIII.

But to those tones what thrilling soul was given,
On that last night of empire !—As a spell
Whereby the life-blood to its source is driven,
On the chill'd heart of multitudes they fell.
Each cadence seem'd a prophecy, to tell
Of sceptres passing from their line away,
An angel-watcher's long and sad farewell,
The requiem of a faith's departing sway,—
A throne's, a nation's dirge, a wail for earth's decay.

LXIV.

Again, and yet again !—from yon high dome,
Still the slow peal comes awfully ; and they
Who never more to rest in mortal home,
Shall throw the breastplate off at fall of day,
Th' imperial band, in close and arm'd array,
As men that from the sword must part no more,
Take through the midnight streets their silent way,
Within their ancient temple to adore,
Ere yet its thousand years of Christian pomp are o'er.

LXV.

It is the hour of sleep : yet few the eyes
O'er which Forgetfulness her balm hath shed,
In the beleaguerr'd city. Stillness lies
With moonlight, o'er the hills and waters spread,
But not the less, with signs and sounds of dread
The time speeds on. No voice is raised to greet
The last brave Constantine ; and yet the tread
Of many steps is in the echoing street,
And pressure of pale crowds, scarce conscious why they meet.

LXVI.

Their homes are luxury's yet : why pour they thence,
With a dim terror in each restless eye ?
Hath the dread car, which bears the pestilence,
In darkness, with its heavy wheels, roll'd by,
And rock'd their palaces, as if on high
The whirlwind pass'd ?—From couch and joyous board
Hath the fierce phantom beckon'd them to die ?
—No !—what are these ?—for them a cup is pour'd¹⁴
More dark with wrath ;—*Man* comes—the spoiler and the
sword.

The Last Constantine.

LXVII.

Still, as the monarch and his chieftains pass
 Through those pale throngs, the streaming torchlight throws
 On some wild form, amidst the living mass,
 Hues, deeply red, like lava's, which disclose
 What countless shapes are worn by mortal woes !
 Lips bloodless, quivering limbs, hands clasp'd in prayer,
 Starts, tremblings, hurryings, tears ; all outward shows
 Betokening inward agonies, were there :
 —Greeks ! Romans ! all but such as image brave despair !

LXVIII.

But high above that scene, in bright repose,
 And beauty borrowing from the torches' gleams—
 A mien of life, yet where no life-blood flows,
 But all instinct with loftier being seems,
 Pale, grand, colossal ; lo ! th' embodied dreams
 Of yore !—Gods, heroes, bards, in marble wrought,
 Look down, as powers, upon the wild extremes
 Of mortal passion !—Yet 'twas man that caught,
 And in each glorious form enshrined immortal thought !

LXIX.

Stood ye not thus amidst the streets of Rome ?
 That Rome which witness'd, in her sceptred days,
 So much of noble death ?—When shrine and dome,
 Midst clouds of incense, rang with choral lays,
 As the long triumph pass'd, with all its blaze
 Of regal spoil, were ye not proudly borne,
 O sovereign forms ! centering all the rays
 Of the soul's lightnings ?—did ye not adorn
 The pomp which earth stood still to gaze on and to mourn ?

LXX.

Hath it been thus ?—Or did ye grace the halls,
 Once peopled by the mighty ?—Haply there,
 In your still grandeur, from the pillar'd walls
 Serene ye smiled on banquets of despair,
 Where hopeless courage wrought itself to dare
 The stroke of its deliverance, midst the glow
 Of living wreaths, the sighs of perfumed air,
 The sound of lyres, the flower-crown'd goblet's flow :¹⁵
 —Behold again !—high hearts make noble offerings now !

LXXI.

The stately fane is reach'd—and at its gate
The warriors pause ; on life's tumultuous tide
A stillness falls, while he, whom regal state
Hath mark'd from all, to be more sternly tried
By suffering, speaks :—each ruder voice hath died,
While his implores forgiveness !—“ If there be
One midst your throngs, my people !—whom in pride,
Or passion, I have wrong'd ; such pardon, free
As mortals hope from Heaven, accord that man to me ! ”

LXXII.

But all is silence ; and a gush of tears
Alone replies !—He hath not been of those
Who, fear'd by many, pine in secret fears
Of all ; th' environ'd but by slaves and foes,
To whom day brings not safety, night repose,
For they have *heard the voice cry “ Sleep no more . ”*
Of them he hath not been, nor such as close
Their hearts to misery, till the time is o'er,
When it speaks low and kneels th' oppressor's throne before !

LXXIII.

He hath been loved—but who may trust the love
Of a degenerate race ?—in other mould
Are cast the free and lofty hearts, that prove
Their faith through fiery trials.—Yet behold,
And call him not forsaken !—Thoughts untold
Have 'lent his aspect calmness, and his tread
Moves firmly to the shrine.—What pomps unfold
Within its precincts !—Isles and seas have shed
Their gorgeous treasures there, around th' imperial dead

LXXIV.

'Tis a proud vision—that most regal pile
Of ancient days !—The lamps are streaming bright
From its rich altar, down each pillar'd aisle,
Whose vista fades in dimness ; but the sight
Is lost in splendours, as the wavering light
Developes, on those walls, the thousand dyes
Of the vein'd marbles, which array their height,
And from yon dome,¹⁰ the lode-star of all eyes,
Pour such an iris-glow as emulates the skies.

LXXV.

But gaze thou not on these ; though heaven's own
 In their soft clouds and radiant tracery vie ;
 Though tints of sun-born glory may suffuse
 Arch, column, rich mosaic : pass thou by
 The stately tombs, where Eastern Cæsars lie,
 Beneath their trophies ; pause not here, for know,
 A deeper source of all sublimity
 Lives in man's bosom, than the world can show,
 In nature or in art, above, around, below.

LXXVI.

Turn thou to mark (tho' tears may dim thy gaze)
 The steel-clad group before yon altar-stone ;
 Heed not, tho' gems and gold around it blaze,
 Those heads unhelm'd, those kneeling forms alone,
 Thus bow'd, look glorious here. The light is thrown
 Full from the shrine on one, a nation's lord,
 A sufferer !—but his task shall soon be done—
 E'en now, as Faith's mysterious cup is pour'd,
 See to that noble brow, peace, not of earth, restored !

LXXVII.

The rite is o'er. The band of brethren part,
 Once—and *but* once—to meet on earth again !
 Each, in the strength of a collected heart,
 To dare what man may dare—and know 'tis vain !
 The rite is o'er : and thou, majestic fane !
 The glory is departed from thy brow !
 Be clothed with dust !—the Christian's farewell strain
 Hath died within thy walls ; thy Cross must bow ;
 Thy kingly tombs be spoil'd ; thy golden shrines laid low :

LXXVIII.

The streets grow still and lonely—and the star,
 The last bright lingerer in the path of morn,
 Gleams faint ; and in the very lap of war,
 As if young Hope with Twilight's ray were born,
 Awhile the city sleeps :—her throngs, o'erworn
 With fears and watchings, to their homes retire ;
 Nor is the balmy air of dayspring torn
 With battle-sounds ;¹⁷ the winds in sighs expire,
 And Quiet broods in mists, that veil the sunbeam's fire.

LXXIX.

The city sleeps !—ay, on the combat's eve,
And by the scaffold's brink, and midst the swell
Of angry seas, hath Nature won reprieve
Thus from her cares. The brave have slumber'd well,
And e'en the fearful, in their dungeon-cell,
Chain'd between Life and Death !—Such rest be thine,
For conflicts wait thee still !—Yet who can tell
In that brief hour, how much of Heaven may shine
Full on thy spirit's dream ?—Sleep, weary Constantine !

LXXX.

Doth the blast rise ?—the clouded East is red,
As if a storm were gathering ; and I hear
What seems like heavy rain-drops, or the tread,
The soft and smother'd step, of those that fear
Surprise from ambush'd foes. Hark ! yet more near
It comes, a many-toned and mingled sound ;
A rustling, as of winds where boughs are sear,
A rolling, as of wheels that shake the ground
From far ; a heavy rush, like seas that burst their bound !

LXXXI.

Wake, wake ! They come from sea and shore ascending
In hosts your ramparts ! Arm ye for the day !
Who now may sleep amidst the thunders rending,
Thro' tower and wall, a path for their array ?
Hark ! how the trumpet cheers them to the prey,
With its wild voice, to which the seas reply !
And the earth rocks beneath their engine's sway,
And the far hills repeat their battle-cry,
Till that fierce tumult seems to shake the vaulted sky !

LXXXII.

They fail not now, the generous band, that long
Have ranged their swords around a falling throne ;
Still in those fearless men the walls are strong,
Hearts such as rescue empires are their own !
—Shall those high energies be vainly shown ?
No ! from their towers th' invading tide is driven
Back, like the Red Sea waves, when God hath blown
With his strong winds !¹⁸—the dark-brow'd ranks are riven—
Shout, warriors of the Cross !—for victory is of Heaven

LXXXIII.

Stand firm !—Again the Crescent host is rushing,
 And the waves foam, as on the galleys sweep,
 With all their fires and darts, tho' blood is gushing
 Fast o'er their sides, as rivers to the deep.
 Stand firm !—there yet is hope—th' arcent is steep.
 And from on high no shaft descends in vain !—
 But those that fall swell up the mangled heap,
 In the red moat, the dying and the slain,
 And o'er that fearful bridge th' assailants moant again :

LXXXIV.

Oh ! the dread mingling, in that awful hour,
 Of all terrific sounds !—the savage tone
 Of the wild horn, the cannon's peal, the shower
 Of hissing darts, the crash of walls o'erthrown,
 The deep dull tambour's beat !—man's voice alone
 Is there unheard ! Ye may not catch the cry
 Of trampled thousands—prayer, and shriek, and moan,
 All drown'd, as that fierce hurricane sweeps by,
 But swell the unheeded sum earth pays for victory !

LXXXV.

War-clouds have wrapt the city !—thro' their dun,
 O'erloaded canopy, at times a blaze,
 As of an angry storm-presaging sun,
 From the Greek fire shoots up ;¹⁹ and lightning rays
 Flash, from the shock of sabres, thro' the haze,
 And glancing arrows cleave the dusky air !
 —Ay ! *this* is in the compass of our gaze,—
 But fearful things, unknown, untold, are there,
 Workings of Wrath and Death, and Anguish, and Despair !

LXXXVI.

Woe, shame and woe !—A chief, a warrior flies,
 A red-cross champion, bleeding, wild, and pale !
 —Oh God ! that nature's passing agonies,
 Thus o'er the spark which dies not should prevail !
 Yes ; rend the arrow from thy shatter'd mail
 And stanch the blood-drops, Genoa's fallen son !²⁰
 Fly swifter yet ! the javelins pour as hail !
 —But there are tortures which thou canst not shun,
 The spirit is *their* prey ;—thy pangs are but begun !

LXXXVII.

Oh ! happy in their homes the noble dead !
The seal is set on their majestic fame ;
Earth has drunk deep the generous blood they shed,
Fate has no power to dim their stainless name !
They may not, in one bitter moment, shame
Long glorious years ; from many a lofty stem
Fall graceful flowers, and eagle hearts grow tame,
And stars drop, fading, from the diadem ;
But the bright *past* is theirs—there is no change for *them* !

LXXXVIII.

Where art thou, Constantine ?—Where Death is reaping
His sevenfold harvest ! Where the stormy light,
Fast as th' artillery's thunderbolts are sweeping,
Throws meteor-bursts o'er battle's noonday-night ?
Where the towers rock and crumble from their height,
As to the earthquake, and the engines ply
Like red Vesuvio ; and where human might
Confronts all this, and still brave hearts beat high,
While scymetars ring loud on shivering panoply.

LXXXIX.

Where art thou, Constantine ?—Where Christian blood
Hath bathed the walls in torrents, and in vain !
Where Faith and Valour perish in the flood,
Whose billows, rising o'er their bosoms, gain
Dark strength each moment : where the gallant slain
Around the banner of the Cross lie strew'd,
Thick as the vine-leaves on the autumnal plain ;
Where all, save one high spirit, is subdued,
And through the breach press on th' o'erwhelming multitude

XC.

Now is he battling midst a host alone.
As the last cedar stems awhile the sway
Of mountain-storms, whose fury hath o'erthrown
Its forest-brethren in their green array !
And he hath cast his purple robe away,
With its imperial bearings ; that his sword
An iron ransom from the chain may pay,
And win, what haply Fate may yet accord,—
A soldier's death,—the all now left an empire's lord !

XCI.

Search for him now, where bloodiest lie the files
Which once were men, the faithful and the brave !
Search for him now, where loftiest rise the piles
Of shatter'd helms and shields, which could not save ;
And crests and banners, never more to wave
In the free winds of heaven !—He is of those
O'er whom the host may rush, the tempest rave,
And the steeds trample, and the spearmen close,
Yet wake them not !—so deep their long and last repose !

XCII.

Woe to the vanquish'd ! thus it hath been still,
Since Time's first march !—Hark, hark, a people's cry !
Ay ! now the conquerors in the streets fulfil
Their task of wrath ! In vain the victims fly !
Hark ! now each piercing tone of agony
Blends in the city's shriek !—The lot is cast.
Slaves, 'twas your *choice*, thus, rather thus, to die,
Than where the warrior's blood flows warm and fast,
And roused and mighty hearts beat proudly to the last !

XCIII.

Oh ! well doth Freedom battle !—Men have made,
E'en midst their blazing roofs, a noble stand,
And on the floors where once their children play'd,
And by the hearths, round with their household band
At evening met ; ay ! struggling hand to hand,
Within the very chambers of their sleep,
There have they taught the spoilers of the land
In chainless hearts what fiery strength lies deep,
To guard free homes !—but ye ! kneel, tremblers ! kneel, and
weep !

XCIV.

'Tis eve—the storm hath died—the valiant rest
Low on their shields ; the day's fierce work is done,
And blood-stain'd seas and burning towers attest
Its fearful deeds. An empire's race is run !
Sad, midst his glory looks the parting sun
Upon the captive city. Hark ! a swell
(Meet to proclaim barbaric war-fields won)
Of fierce triumphal sounds, that wildly tell,
The Soldan comes within the Cæsars' halls to dwell !

XCIV.

Yes ! with the peal of cymbal and of gong,
He comes,—the Moslem treads those ancient halls !
But all is stillness there, as Death had long
Been lord alone within those gorgeous walls.
And half that silence of the grave appals
The conqueror's heart. Ay, thus with Triumph's hour,
Still comes the boding whisper, which recalls
A thought of those impervious clouds that low'r
O'er Grandeur's path, a sense of some far mightier Power

XCVI.

"The owl upon Afrasiab's towers hath sung
Her watch-song, and around th' imperial throne
The spider weaves his web !"²¹ Still darkly hung
That verse of omen, as a prophet's tone,
O'er his flush'd spirit. Years on years have flown
To prove its truth : kings pile their domes in air
That the coil'd snake may bask on sculptured stonc,
And nations clear the forest, to prepare
For the wild fox and wolf more stately dwellings there !

XCVII.

But thou ! that on thy ramparts proudly dying,
As a crown'd leader in such hours should die,
Upon thy pyre of shiver'd spears art lying,
With the heavens o'er thee for a canopy,
And banners for thy shroud !—No tear, no sigh,
Shall mingle with thy dirge ; for thou art now
Beyond vicissitude ! Lo ! rear'd on high,
The Crescent blazes, while the Cross must bow ;
But where no change can reach—there, Constantine, art thou !

XCVIII.

"After life's fitful fever thou sleep'st well !"
We may not mourn thee !—Sceptred chiefs, from whom
The earth received her destiny, and fell
Before them trembling—to a sterner doom
Have oft been call'd. For them the dungeon's gloom,
With its cold, starless midnight, hath been made
More fearful darkness, where, as in a tomb,
Without a tomb's repose, the chain hath weigh'd
Their very soul to dust, with each high power decay'd.

The Last Constantine.

XCIX.

Or in the eye of thousands they have stood,
 To meet the stroke of Death—but not like thee !
 From bonds and scaffolds hath appeal'd *their* blood,
 But thou didst fall unfetter'd, arm'd, and free,
 And kingly, to the last !—And if it be,
 That, from the viewless world, whose marvels none
 Return to tell, a spirit's eye can see
 The things of earth ; still may'st thou hail the sun,
 Which o'er thy land shall dawn, when Freedom's fight is
 won !

C.

And the hour comes, in storm !—A light is glancing
 Far through the forest-god's Arcadian shades !
 —'Tis not the moonbeam, tremulously dancing,
 Where lone Alpheus bathes his haunted glades ;
 A murmur, gathering power, the air pervades,
 Round dark Cithæron, and by Delphi's steep ;
 —'Tis not the song and lyre of Grecian maids,
 Nor pastoral reed that lulls the vales to sleep,
 Nor yet the rustling pines, nor yet the sounding deep ;

CL.

Arms glitter on the mountains, which, of old,
 Awoke to freedom's first heroic strain,
 And by the streams, once crimson as they roll'd
 The Persian helm and standard to the main ;
 And the blue waves of Salamis again
 Thrill to the trumpet ; and the tombs reply,
 With their ten thousand echoes, from each plain,
 Far as Plataea's, where the mighty lie,
 Who crown'd so proudly there the bowl of liberty !

CII.

Bright land, with glory mantled o'er by song !
 Land of the vision-peopled hills and streams,
 And fountains, whose deserted banks along,
 Still the soft air with inspiration teems ;
 Land of the graves, whose dwellers shall be themes
 To verse for ever ; and of ruin'd shrines,
 That scarce look desolate beneath such beams,
 As bathe in gold thine ancient rocks and pines !—
 When shall thy sons pose in peace beneath their vines ?

The Last Constantine.

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CIII.

*Thou wert not made for bonds, nor shame, nor fear!—
Do the hoar oaks and dark-green laurels wave
O'er Mantinea's earth?—doth Pindus rear
His snows, the sunbeam and the storm to brave?
And is there yet on Marathon a grave?
And doth Eurotas lead his silvery line
By Sparta's ruins?—And shall man, a slave,
Bow'd to the dust, amid such scenes repine?
—If e'er a soil was mark'd for Freedom's step—'tis thine!*

CIV.

*Wash from that soil the stains, with battle-showers!
—Beneath Sophia's dome the Moslem prays,
The Crescent gleams amidst the olive-bowers,
In the Comneni's²³ halls the Tartar sways:
But not for long!—the spirit of those days,
When the three hundred made their funeral pile
Of Asia's dead, is kindling, like the rays
Of thy rejoicing sun, when first his smile
Warms the Parnassian rock, and gilds the Delian isle.*

CV.

*If then 'tis given thee to arise in might,
Trampling the scourge, and dashing down the chain,
Pure be thy triumphs, as thy name is bright!
The cross of victory should not know a stain!
So may that faith once more supremely reign,
Through which we lift our spirits from the dust!
And deem not, e'en when virtue dies in vain,
She dies forsaken; but repose our trust
On Him whose ways are dark, unsearchable—but just*

NOTES.

NOTE 1.

— — *While Ismael's bow, &c.*

THE army of Mahomet II., at the siege of Constantinople, was thronged with fanatics of all sects and nations, who were not enrolled amongst the regular troops. The Sultan himself marched upon the city from Adrianople ; but his army must have been principally collected in the Asiatic provinces, which he had previously visited.

NOTE 2.

— — *Bring wine, bring odours, &c.*

Huc vina, et unguenta, et nimium brevis
Flores amœnæ ferre jube rosæ.

Hor., lib. ii. od. 3.

NOTE 3.

From the Seven Towers, &c.

The Castle of the Seven Towers is mentioned in the Byzantine history, as early as the sixth century of the Christian era, as an edifice which contributed materially to the defence of Constantinople ; and it was the principal bulwark of the town on the coast of the Propontis in the later periods of the empire. For a description of this building, see "Touqueville's Travels."

NOTE 4.

With its long march of sceptred imag'ry.

An allusion to the Roman custom of carrying in procession, at the funerals of their great men, the images of their ancestors.

NOTE 5.

The Roman cast his glittering mail away.

The following was the ceremony of consecration with which Decius devoted himself in battle. He was ordered by Valerius, the pontifex maximus, to quit his military habit, and put on the robe he wore in the senate. Valerius then covered his head with a veil; commanded him to put forth his hand under his robe to his chin, and, standing with both feet upon a javelin, to repeat these words: "O Janus, Jupiter, Mars, Romulus, Bellona, and ye Lares and Novensiles! All ye heroes who dwell in heaven, and all ye gods who rule over us and our enemies, especially ye gods of hell! I honour you, invoke you, and humbly entreat you to prosper the arms of the Romans, and to transfer all fear and terror from them to their enemies; and I do, for the safety of the Roman people and their legions, devote myself, and with myself the army and auxiliaries of the enemy, to the infernal gods and the goddess of the earth." Decius then, girding his robe around him, mounted his horse, and rode full speed into the thickest of the enemy's battalions. The Latins were, for a while, thunderstruck at this spectacle; but at length recovering themselves, they discharged a shower of darts, under which the consul fell.

NOTE 6.

See Gibbon's animated description of the arrival of five Christian ships, with men and provisions, for the succour of the besieged, not many days before the fall of Constantinople.—"Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," vol. xii. p. 215.

NOTE 7.

— *As when the wind hath blown
O'er Indian groves, &c.*

The summits of the lofty rocks in the Carnatic, particularly about the Ghauts, are sometimes covered with the bamboo-tree, which

grows in thick clumps, and is of such uncommon aridity, that in the sultry season of the year the friction occasioned by a strong dry wind will literally produce sparks of fire, which frequently setting the woods in a blaze, exhibit to the spectator stationed in a valley surrounded by rocks, a magnificent, though imperfect circle of fire.—Notes to Kindersley's "Specimens of Hindoo Literature."

NOTE 8.

—The snowy crown
Of far Olympus, &c.

Those who steer their westward course through the middle of the Propontis may at once descry the high lands of Thrace and Bithynia, and never lose sight of the lofty summit of Mount Olympus, covered with eternal snows.—"Decline and Fall," &c. vol. iii. p. 8.

NOTE 9.

—Mohammed's face
Kindles beneath their aspect, &c.

Mahomet II. was greatly addicted to the study of astrology. His calculations in this science led him to fix upon the morning of the 20th of May as the fortunate hour for a general attack upon the city.

NOTE 10.

Thy Georgian bride, &c.

Constantine Palæologus was betrothed to a Georgian princess; and the very spring which witnesses the fall of Constantinople had been fixed upon as the time for conveying the imperial bride to that city.

NOTE 11.

Those men are strangers here.

Many of the adherents of Constantine, in his last noble stand for the liberties, or rather the honour, of a falling empire, were foreigners, and chiefly Italians.

NOTE 12.

Know'st thou the land, &c.

This and the next line are an almost literal translation from :
beautiful song of Goethe's :—

“ Kennst du das Land, wo die Zitronen blühn,
Mit dunkeln Laub die gold Orangen glühn ? ” &c.

NOTE 13.

The idea expressed in this stanza is beautifully amplified in
Schiller's poem “ Das Lied der Glocke.”

NOTE 14.

Hath the fierce Phantom, &c.

It is said to be a Greek superstition that the plague is announced
by the heavy rolling of an invisible chariot, heard in the streets at
midnight ; and also by the appearance of a gigantic spectre, who
summons the devoted person by name.

NOTE 15.

Ye smiled on banquets of despair.

Many instances of such banquets, given and shared by persons
resolved upon death, might be adduced from ancient history. That
of Vibius Virius, at Capua, is amongst the most memorable.

NOTE 16.

Yen dome, the lode-star of all eyes.

For a minute description of the marbles, jaspers, and porphyries
employed in the construction of St. Sophia, see “ The Decline and
Fall,” &c., vol. vii. p. 120.

NOTE 17.

*Nor is the balmy air of dayspring torn
With battle sounds, &c.*

The assault of the city took place at day-break, and the Turks were strictly enjoined to advance in silence, which had also been commanded, on pain of death, during the preceding night. This circumstance is finely alluded to by Miss Baillie, in her tragedy of "Constantine Palæologus" :—

"Silent shall be the march : nor drum, nor trump,
Nor clash of arms, shall to the watchful foe
Our near approach betray : silent and soft,
As the pard's velvet foot on Lybia's sands,
Slow stealing with crouch'd shoulders on her prey."

Constantine Palæologus, act iv.

"The march and labour of thousands" must, however, as Gibbon observes, "have inevitably produced a strange confusion of discordant clumours, which reached the ears of the watchmen on the towers."

NOTE 18.

The dark-brow'd ranks are riven.

"After a conflict of two hours, the Greeks still maintained and preserved their advantage," says Gibbon. The strenuous exertions of the janizaries first turned the fortune of the day.

NOTE 19.

From the Greek fire shoots up, &c.

"A circumstance that distinguishes the siege of Constantinople is the re-union of the ancient and modern artillery. The bullet and the battering-ram were directed against the same wall ; nor had the discovery of gunpowder superseded the use of the liquid and unextinguishable fire."—*Decline and Fall*, &c., vol. xii. p. 213.

NOTE 20.

And stanch the blood-drops, Genoa's fallen son !

"The immediate loss of Constantinople may be ascribed to the

bullet, or arrow, which pierced the gauntlet of John Justiniani (a Genoese chief). The sight of his blood, and the exquisite pain, appalled the courage of the chief, whose arms and counsels were the firmest rampart of the city."—*Decline and Fall*, &c., vol. xii. p. 229.

NOTE 21.

*The owl upon Afrasiab's towers hath sung
Her watch-song, &c.*

Mahomet II., on entering, after his victory, the palace of the Byzantine emperors, was strongly impressed with the silence and desolation which reigned within its precincts. "A melancholy reflection on the vicissitudes of human greatness forced itself on his mind, and he repeated an elegant distich of Persian poetry: 'The spider has wove his web in the imperial palace, and the owl hath sung her watch-song on the towers of Afrasiab.'"—*Decline and Fall*, &c., vol. xii. p. 240.

NOTE 22.

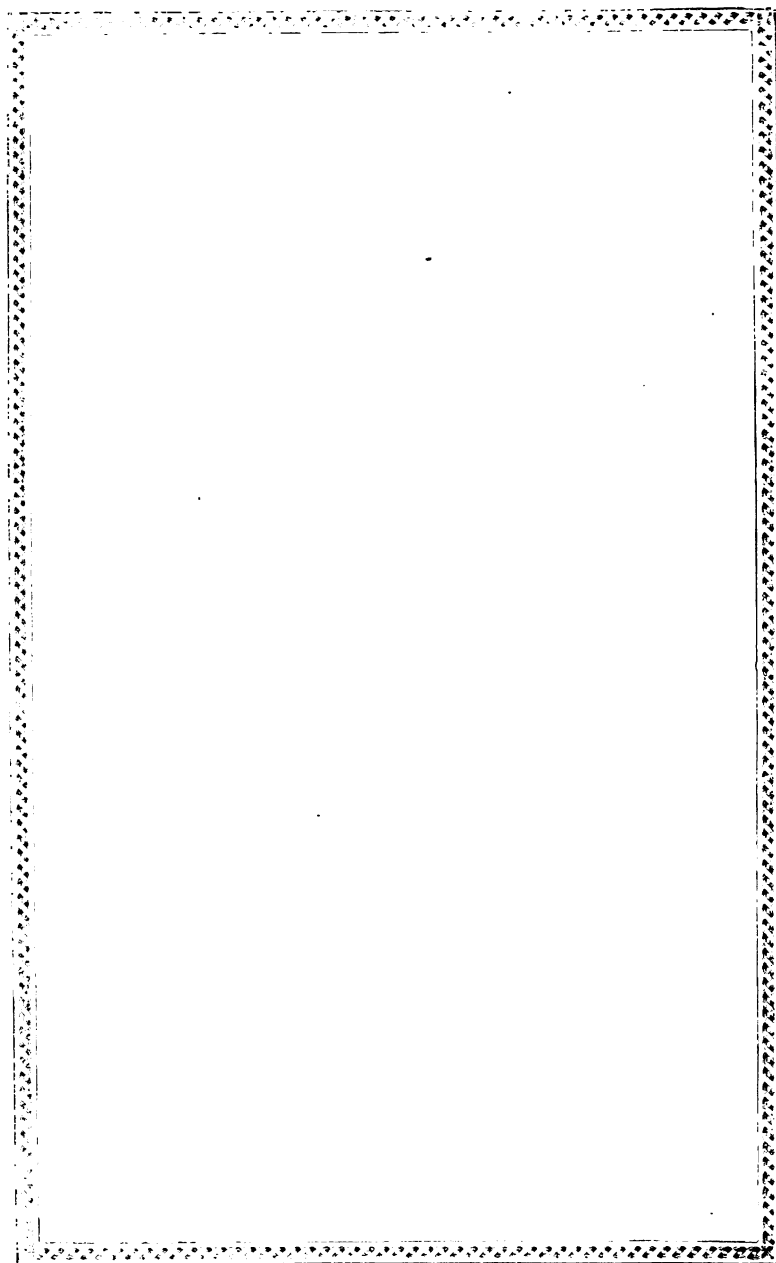
The Bowl of Liberty—

One of the ceremonies by which the battle of Plataea was annually commemorated was, to crown with wine a cup called the *Bowl of Liberty*, which was afterwards poured forth in libation.

NOTE 23.

In the Comneni's halls—

The Comneni were amongst the most distinguished of the families who filled the Byzantine throne in the declining years of the Eastern empire.





MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.



ELYSIUM.

"In the Elysium of the ancients, we find none but heroes and persons who had either been fortunate or distinguished on earth: the children, and apparently the slaves and lower classes,—that is to say, Poverty, Misfortune, and Innocence, were banished to the infernal regions. —CHATEAUBRIAND, *Génie de Christianisme*.

FAIR wert thou, in the dreams
Of elder time, thou land of glorious flowers,
And summer-winds, and low-toned silvery streams,
Dim with the shadows of thy laurel-bowers !
Where, as they pass'd, bright hours
Left no faint sense of parting, such as clings
To earthly love, and joy in loveliest things !

Fair wert thou, with the light
On thy blue hills and sleepy waters cast,
From purple skies ne'er deepening into night,
Yet soft, as if each moment were their last
Of glory, fading fast
Along the mountains !—but *thy* golden day
Was not as those that warn us of decay

And ever, through thy shades,
A swell of deep Eolian sound went by,
From fountain-voices in their secret glades,
And low reed-whispers, making sweet reply
To summer's breezy sigh !
And young leaves trembling to the wind's light breath,
Which ne'er had touch'd them with a hue of death !

And the transparent sky
 Rang as a dome, all thrilling to the strain
 Of harps that, midst the woods, made harmony
 Solemn and sweet ; yet troubling not the brain
 With dreams and yearnings vain,
 And dim remembrances, that still draw birth
 From the bewildering music of the earth.

And who, with silent tread,
 Moved o'er the plains of waving Asphodel?
 Who, of the hosts, the night-o'erpeopling dead,
 Amidst the shadowy amaranth-bowers might dwell,
 And listen to the swell
 Of those majestic hymn-notes, and inhale
 The spirit wandering in th' immortal gale?

They of the sword, whose praise,
 With the bright wine at nations' feasts, went round !
 They of the lyre, whose unforgotten lays
 On the morn's wing had sent their mighty sound,
 And in all regions found
 Their echoes midst the mountains !—and become
 In man's deep heart, as voices of his home !

They of the daring thought !
 Daring and powerful, yet to dust allied ;
 Whose flight thro' stars, and seas, and depths had sought
 The soul's far birth-place—but without a guide !
 Sages and seers, who died,
 And left the world their high mysterious dreams,
 Born midst the olive-woods, by Grecian streams.

But they, of whose abode
 Midst her green valleys earth retain'd no trace,
 Save a flower springing from their burial-sod,
 A shade of sadness on some kindred face,
 A void and silent place
 In some sweet home ;—thou hadst no wreaths for these,
 Thou sunny land ! with all thy deathless trees !

The peasant, at his door
 Might sink to die, when vintage-feasts were spread,
 And songs on every wind !—From thy bright shore
 No lovelier vision floated round his head,—
 Thou wert for nobler dead !
 He heard the bounding steps which round him fell,
 And sigh'd to bid the festal sun farewell !

The slave, whose very tears
Were a forbidden luxury, and whose breast
Shut up the woes and burning thoughts of years,
As in the ashes of an urn compress'd ;—

He might not be thy guest !
No gentle breathings from thy distant sky
Come o'er *his* path and whisper'd, " Liberty ! "

Calm, on its leaf-strewn bier,
Unlike a gift of nature to decay,
Too rose-like still, too beautiful, too dear,
The child at rest before its mother lay ;—
E'en so to pass away,
With its bright smile !—Elysium ! what wert *thou*,
To her, who wept o'er that young slumberer's brow ?

Thou hadst no home, green land !
For the fair creature from her bosom gone,
With life's first flowers just opening in her hand,
And all the lovely thoughts and dreams unknown,
Which in its clear eye shone
Like the spring's wakening !—But that light was past—
Where went the dew-drop, sweet before the blast ?

Not where thy soft winds play'd,
Not where thy waters lay in glassy sleep !—
Fade, with thy bowers, thou land of visions, fade !
From thee no voice came o'er the gloomy deep,
And bade man cease to weep !
Fade, with the amaranth-plain, the myrtle-grove,
Which could not yield one hope to sorrowing love !

For the most loved are they,
Of whom Fame speaks not with her clarion-voice
In regal halls !—the shades o'erhang their way,
The vale, with its deep fountains, is their choice,
And gentle hearts rejoice
Around their steps !—till silently they die,
As a stream shrinks from summer's burning eye.

And the world knows not then,
Not then, nor ever, what pure thoughts are fled !
Yet these are they, that on the souls of men
Come back, when night her folding veil hath spread,—
The long-remember'd dead !
But not with *thee* might aught save Glory dwell—
Fade, fade away, thou shore of Asphodel !

GREEK SONGS.

I.

THE STORM OF DELPHI.*

FAR through the Delphian shades
 An Eastern trumpet rung !
 And the started eagle rush'd on high,
 With a sounding flight through the fiery sky,
 And banners, o'er the shadowy glades,
 To the sweeping winds were flung.

Banners, with deep-red gold
 All waving, as a flame,
 And a fitful glance from the bright spear-head
 On the dim wood-paths of the mountain shed,
 And a peal of Asia's war-notes told
 That in arms the Persian came.

He came, with starry gems
 On his quiver and his crest ;
 With starry gems, at whose heart the day
 Of the cloudless Orient burning lay ;
 And they cast a gleam on the laurel-stems,
 As onward his thousands press'd.

But a gloom fell o'er their way,
 And a heavy moan went by !
 A moan, yet not like the wind's low swell,
 When its voice grows wild amidst cave and dell,
 But a mortal murmur of dismay,
 Or a warrior's dying sigh !

* See the account cited from Herodotus, in Mitford's "Greece."

A gloom fell o'er their way !
'Twas not the shadow cast
By the dark pine-boughs, as they cross'd the blue
Of the Grecian heavens with their solemn hue ;
The air was fill'd with a mightier sway,—
But on the spearmen pass'd !

And hollow, to their tread,
Came the echoes of the ground,
And banners droop'd, as with the dew o'erborne,
And the wailing blast of the battle-horn
Had an alter'd cadence dull and dead,
Of strange foreboding sound.

But they blew a louder strain
When the steep defiles were pass'd !
And afar the crown'd Parnassus rose,
To shine thro' heaven with his radiant snows,
And in golden light the Delphian fane
Before them stood at last !

In golden light it stood,
Midst the laurels gleaming lone,
For the Sun-God yet, with a lovely smile,
O'er its graceful pillars look'd awhile,
Tho' the stormy shade on cliff and wood
Grew deep round its mountain-throne.

And the Persians gave a shout !
But the marble walls replied,
With a clash of steel, and a sullen roar
Like heavy wheels on the ocean shore,
And a savage trumpet's note peal'd out,
Till their hearts for terror died !

On the armour of the god
Then a viewless hand was laid ;
There were helm and spear, with a clanging din,
And corslet brought from the shrine within,
From the inmost shrine of the dread abode,
And before its front array'd.

And a sudden silence fell
Thro' the dim and loaded air !
On the wild bird's wing, and the myrtle-spray,
And the very founts, in their silvery way,
With a weight of sleep came down the spell,
Till man grew breathless there.

The Storm of Delphi.

But the pause was broken soon !
 'Twas not by song or lyre ;
 For the Delphian maids had left their bowers,
 And the hearths were lone in the city's towers,
 But there burst a sound thro' the misty noon,
 That battle-noon of fire !

It burst from earth and heaven !
 It roll'd from crag and cloud !
 For a moment of the mountain-blast,
 With a thousand stormy voices pass'd,
 And the purple gloom of the sky was riven,
 When the thunder peal'd aloud.

And the lightnings in their play
 Flash'd forth, like javelins thrown ;
 Like sun-darts wing'd from the silver bow,
 They smote the spear and the turban'd brow,
 And the bright gems flew from the crest like spray,
 And the banners were struck down !

And the massy oak-boughs crash'd
 To the fire-bolts from on high ;
 And the forest lent its billowy roar,
 While the glorious tempest onward bore,
 And lit the streams, as they foam'd and dash'd,
 With the fierce rain sweeping by.

Then rush'd the Delphian men
 On the pale and scatter'd host ;
 Like the joyous burst of a flashing wave,
 They rush'd from the dim Corycian cave,
 And the singing blast o'er wood and glen
 Roll'd on, with the spears they toss'd.

There were cries of wild dismay,
 There were shouts of warrior-glee,
 There were savage sounds of the tempest's mirth,
 That shook the realm of their eagle-birth ;
 But the mount of song, when they died away,
 Still rose, with its temple, free !

And the Pæan swell'd ere long,
 Io Pæan ! from the fane ;
 Io Pæan ! for the war-array,
 On the crown'd Parnassus riven that day !—
 Thou shalt rise as free, thou mount of song !
 With thy bounding streams again.

II.

THE BOWL OF LIBERTY.*

BEFORE the fiery sun,
The sun that looks on Greece with cloudless eye,
In the free air, and on the war-field won,
Our fathers crown'd the Bowl of Liberty.

Amidst the tombs they stood,
The tombs of heroes ! with the solemn skies,
And the wide plain around, where patriot-blood
Had steep'd the soil in hues of sacrifice.

They call'd the glorious dead,
In the strong faith which brings the viewless nigh,
And pour'd rich odours o'er the battle-bed,
And bade them to the rite of Liberty.

They call'd them from the shades,
The golden-fruited shades, where minstrels tell
How softer light th' immortal clime pervades,
And music floats o'er meads of Asphodel.

Then fast the bright-red wine †
Flow'd to *their* names who taught the world to die,
And made the land's green turf a living shrine,
Meet for the wreath and Bowl of Liberty.

So the rejoicing earth
Took from her vines again the blood she gave,
And richer flowers to deck the tomb drew birth
From the free soil, thus hallow'd to the brave.

We have the battle-fields,
The tombs, the names, the blue majestic sky,
We have the founts the purple vintage yields ;—
When shall *we* crown the Bowl of Liberty ?

* This and the following piece appeared originally in the *New Monthly Magazine*.

† For an account of this ceremony, anciently performed in commemoration of the battle of Plataeæ, see Potter's "*Antiquities of Greece*," vol. i. p. 38.

III.

THE VOICE OF SCIO.

A voice from Scio's isle—
A voice of song, a voice of old,
Swept far as cloud or billow roll'd;
And earth was hush'd the while.

The souls of nations woke !
Where lies the land whose hills among
That voice of Victory hath not rung,
As if a trumpet spoke ?

To sky, and sea, and shore
Of those whose blood, on Ilion's plain,
Swept from the rivers to the main,
A glorious tale it bore.

Still, by our sun-bright deep,
With all the fame that fiery lay
Threw round them, in its rushing way,
The sons of battle sleep.

And kings their turf have crown'd !
And pilgrims o'er the foaming wave
Brought garlands there : so rest the brave,
Who thus their bard have found !

A voice from Scio's isle,
A voice as deep hath risen again !
As far shall peal its thrilling strain,
Where'er our sun may smile !

Let not its tones expire !
Such power to waken earth and heaven,
And night and vengeance, ne'er was given
To mortal song or lyre !

Know ye not whence it comes?—
From ruin'd hearths, from burning fanes,
From kindred blood on yon red plains,
From desolated homes.

'Tis with us through the night !
'Tis on our hills, 'tis in our sky—
Hear it, ye heavens ! when swords flash high,
O'er the mid-waves of fight !

IV.

THE SPARTAN'S MARCH.*

"The Spartans used not the trumpet in their march into battle, says Thucydides, because they wished not to excite the rage of their warriors. Their charging step was made to the 'Dorian mood of flutes and soft recorders.' The valour of a Spartan was too highly tempered to require a stunning or rousing impulse. His spirit was like a steed too proud for the spur."—CAMPBELL, *On the Elegiac Poetry of the Greeks*.

'Twas morn upon the Grecian hills,
Where peasants dress'd the vines,
Sunlight was on Cithæron's rills,
Arcadia's rocks and pines.

And brightly, through his reeds and flowers,
Eurotas wander'd by,
When a sound arose from Sparta's towers
Of solemn harmony.

Was it the hunters' choral strain
To the woodland-goddess pour'd ?
Did virgin-hands in Pallas' fane
Strike the full-sounding chord ?

But helms were glancing on the stream,
Spears ranged in close array,
And shields flung back a glorious beam
To the morn of a fearful day !

* Originally published in the *Edinburgh Magazine*

The Urn and Sword.

And the mountain-echoes of the land
 Swell'd through the deep-blue sky,
 While to soft strains moved forth a band
 Of men that moved to die.

They march'd not with the trumpet's blast
 Nor bade the horn peal out ;
 And the laurel-groves, as on they pass'd,
 Rang with no battle-shout !

They ask'd no clarion's voice to fire
 Their souls with an impulse high ;
 But the Dorian reed and the Spartan lyre
 For the sons of liberty !

And still sweet flutes, their path around,
 Sent forth Eolian breath ;
 They needed not a sterner sound
 To marshal them for death !

So moved they calmly to their field,
 Thence never to return,
 Save bearing back the Spartan shield,
 Or on it proudly borne !

V.

THE URN AND SWORD.

THEY sought for treasures in the tomb,
 Where gentler hands were wont to spread
 Fresh boughs and flowers of purple bloom,
 And sunny ringlets, for the dead.*

They scatter'd far the greensward-heap,
 Where once those hands the bright wine pour'd.
 What found they in the home of sleep ?—
 A mouldering urn, a shiver'd sword !

* See Potter's "Grecian Antiquities," vol. ii. p. 234.

An urn, which held the dust of one
Who died when hearths and shrines were free ;
A sword, whose work was proudly done,
Between our mountains and the sea.

And these are treasures !—undismay'd,
Still for the suffering land we trust,
Wherein the past its fame hath laid,
With freedom's sword, and valour's dust.

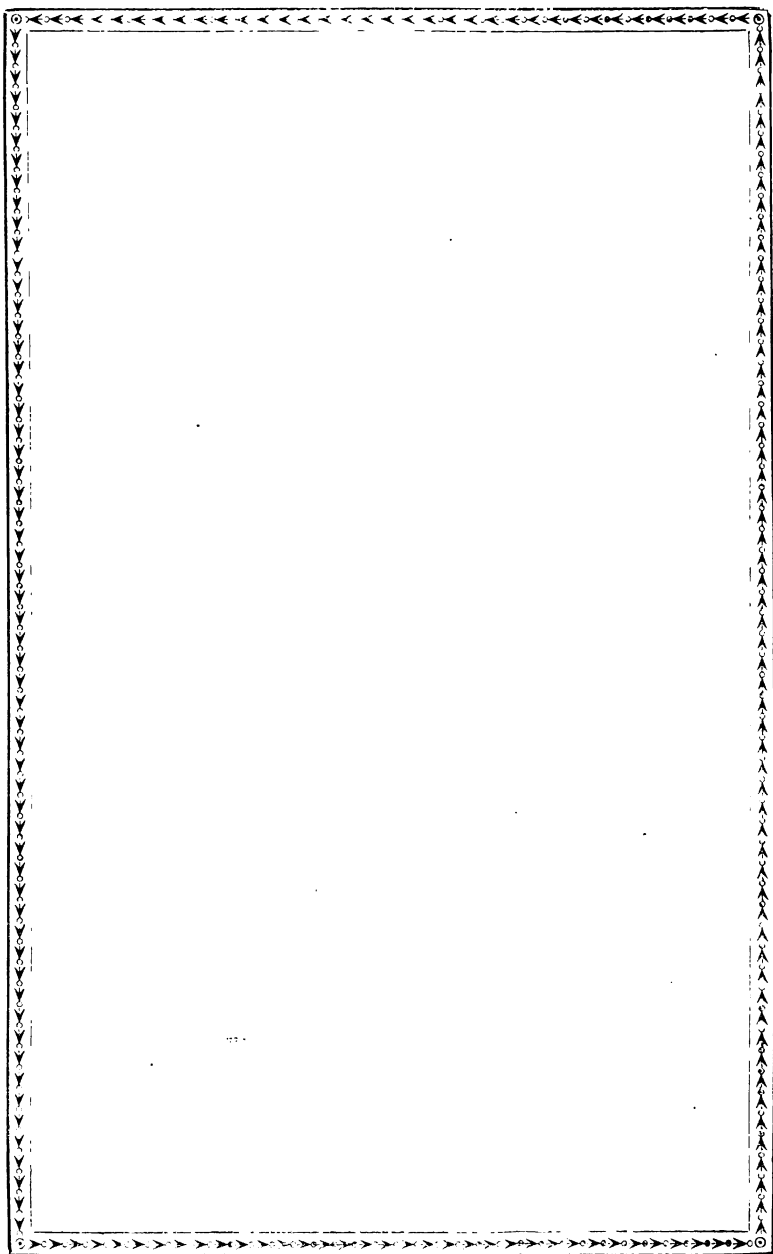
VI.

THE MYRTLE-BOUGH.

Still green, along our sunny shore
The flowering myrtle waves,
As when its fragrant boughs of yore
Were offer'd on the graves ;
The graves, wherein our mighty men
Had rest, unviolated then.

Still green it waves ! as when the hearth
Was sacred through the land ;
And fearless was the banquet's mirth,
And free the minstrel's hand ;
And guests, with shining myrtle crown'd,
Sent the wreath'd lyre and wine-cup round.

Still green ! as when on holy ground
The tyrant's blood was pour'd :—
Forget ye not what garlands bound
The young deliverer's sword !—
Though earth may shroud Harmodius now,
We still have sword and myrtle-bough !



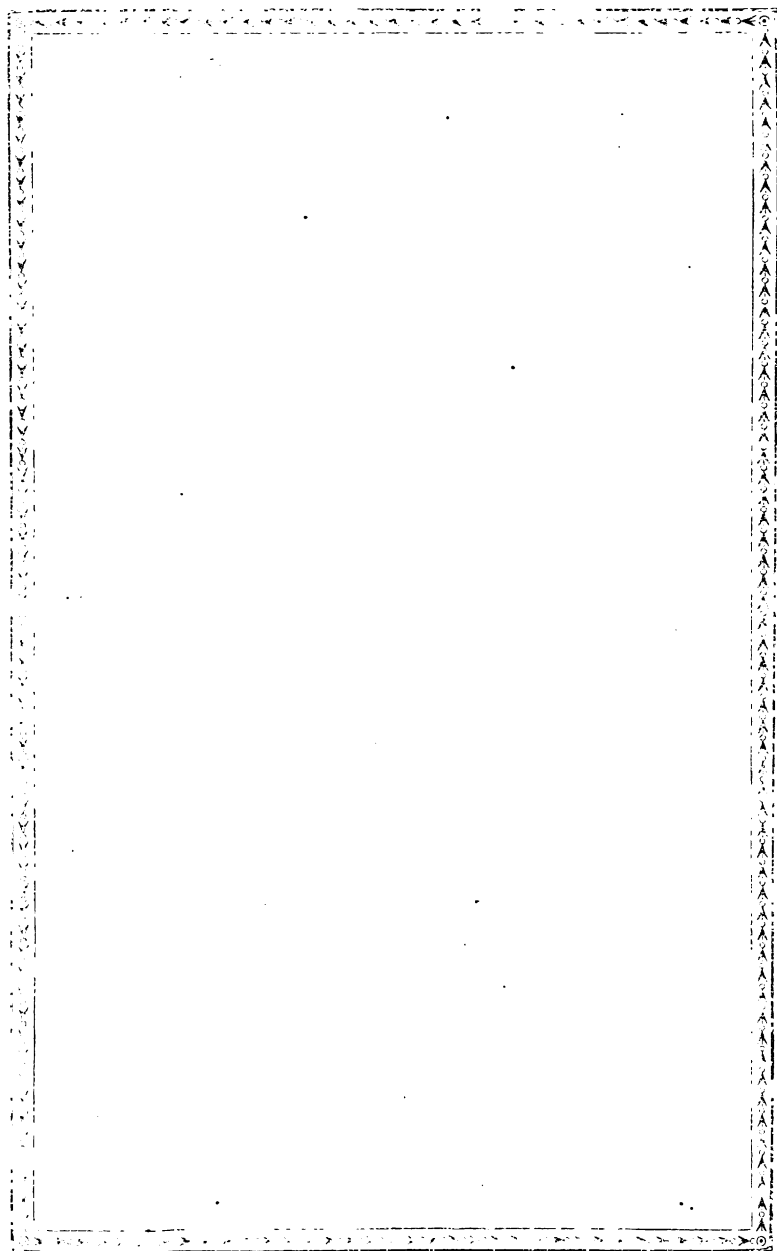
THE SIEGE OF VALENCIA

A DRAMATIC POEM.

Indicio ha dado esta no vista hazaña
Del valor que en los siglos venideros
Tendrán los Hijos de la fuerte España,
Hijos de tal padres herederos.

Hallò sola en Numancia todo quanto
Debe con justo titulo cantarse,
Y lo que puede dar materia al canto.

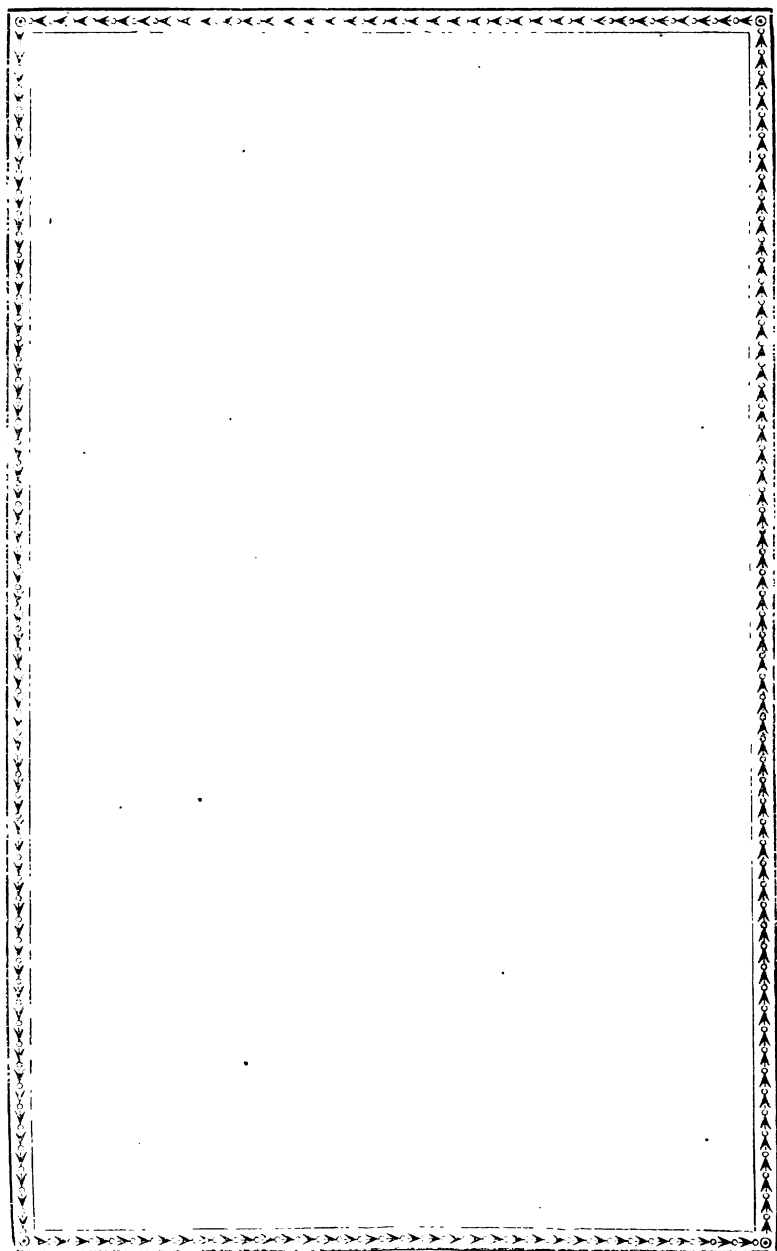
Numancia de CERVANTES





"Alas! for love,—for woman's breast,
If woe like this must be!"

(p. 58.)



ADVERTISEMENT.

THE history of Spain records two instances of the severe and self-devoting heroism which forms the subject of the following dramatic poem. The first of these occurred at the siege of Tarifa, which was defended in 1294 for Sancho, King of Castile, during the rebellion of his brother Don Juan, by Guzman, surnamed the Good.* The second is related of Alonso Lopez de Texeda, who, until his garrison had been utterly disabled by pestilence, maintained the city of Zamora for the children of Don Pedro the Cruel, against the forces of Henrique of Trastamara.†

Impressive as were the circumstances which distinguished both these memorable sieges, it appeared to the author of the following pages that a deeper interest, as well as a stronger colour of nationality, might be imparted to the scenes in which she has feebly attempted "to describe high passions and high actions;" by connecting a religious feeling with the patriotism and high-minded loyalty which had thus been proved "faithful unto death," and by surrounding her ideal dramatis personæ with recollections derived from the heroic legends of Spanish chivalry. She has, for this reason, employed the agency of imaginary characters, and fixed upon "Valencia del Cid" as the scene to give them

"A local habitation and a name."

* See Quintana's "Vidas de Españoles celebres," p. 53.

† See the Preface to Southey's "Chronicle of the Cid."

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

ALVAR GONZALEZ	. . .	<i>Governor of Valen. la.</i>
ALPHONSO	}	 <i>His Sons.</i>
CARLOS		
HERNANDEZ		<i>A Priest.</i>
ABDULLAH		<i>A Moorish Prince, Chief of the Army besieging Valencia.</i>
GARCIA		<i>A Spanish Knight.</i>
ELMINA		<i>Wife to Gonzales.</i>
XIMENA		<i>Her Daughter.</i>
THERESA		<i>An Attendant.</i>

Citizens, Soldiers, Attendants, &c.



THE SIEGE OF VALENCIA



SCENE I.—*Room in a Palace of Valencia.*

XIMENA *singing to a Lute.*

BALLAD.

"THOU hast not been with a festal throng,
At the pouring of the wine ;
Men bear not from the Hall of Song,
A mien so dark as thine !
There's blood upon thy shield,
There's dust upon thy plume,—
Thou hast brought, from some disastrous field,
That brow of wrath and gloom !"

And is there blood upon my shield?—
Maiden ! it well may be !
We have sent the streams from our battle-field,
All darken'd to the sea !
We have given the founts a stain,
Midst their woods of ancient pine ;
And the ground is wet—but not with rain,
Deep-dyed—but not with wine !

"The ground is wet—but not with rain—
We have been in war array,
And the noblest blood of Christian Spain
Hath bathed her soil to-day.

Siege of Valencia.

I have seen the strong man die,
 And the stripling meet his fate.
 Where the mountain-winds go scanding by,
 In the Roncesvalles' Strait.

"In the gloomy Roncesvalles' Strait
 There are helmets and lances cleft;
 And they that moved at morn elate
 On a bed of heath are left!
 There's many a fair young face,
 Which the war-steed hath gone o'er;
 At many a board there is kept a place
 For those that come no more!"

"Alas! for love,—for woman's breast,
 If woe like this must be!
 Hast thou seen a youth with an eagle crest,
 And a white plume waving free?
 With his proud quick-flashing eye,
 And is mien of knightly state?
 Doth he come from where the swords flash'd high,
 In the Roncesvalles' Strait?"

"In the gloomy Roncesvalles' Strait
 I saw and mark'd him well;
 For nobly on his steed he sate,
 When the pride of manhood fell!—
 But it is not youth which turns
 From the field of spears again;
 For the boy's high heart too wildly turns,
 Till it rests amidst the slain!"

"Thou canst not say that *he* lies low—
 The lovely and the brave!
 Oh! none could look on his joyous brow,
 And think upon the grave!
 Dark, dark perchance the day
 Hath been with valour's fate,
 But *he* is on his homeward way,
 From the Roncesvalles' Strait!"

"There is dust upon his joyous brow,
 And o'er his graceful head;
 And the war-horse will not wake him now,
 Tho' it bruise his greensward bed!"

I have seen the stripling die,
And the strong man meet his fate,
Where the mountain-winds go sounding by,
In the Roncesvalles' Strait !”

ELMINA enters.

Elm. Your songs are not as those of other days,
Mine own Ximena !—Where is now the young
And buoyant spirit of the morn, which once
Breathed in your spring-like melodies, and woke
Joy's echo from all hearts ?

Kim. My mother, this
Is not the free air of our mountain-wilds ;
And these are not the halls, wherein my voice
First pour'd those gladdening strains.

Elm. Alas ! thy heart
(I see it well) doth sicken for the pure,
Free-wandering breezes of the joyous hills,
Where thy young brothers, o'er the rock and heath,
Bound in glad boyhood, e'en as torrent-streams
Leap brightly from the heights. Had we not been
Within these walls thus suddenly begirt,
Thou shouldst have track'd ere now, with step as light,
Their wild wood-paths.

Kim. I would not but have shared
These hours of woe and peril, tho' the deep
And solemn feelings wakening at their voice,
Claim all the wrought-up spirit to themselves,
And will not blend with mirth. The storm doth hush
All floating whispery sounds, all bird-notes wild
O' th' summer-forest, filling earth and heaven
With its own awful music.—And 'tis well !
Should not a hero's child be train'd to hear
The trumpet's blast unstartled, and to look
In the fix'd face of Death without dismay ?

Elm. Woe ! woe ! that aught so gentle and so young
Should thus be call'd to stand i' the tempest's path,
And bear the token and the hue of death
On a bright soul so soon ! I had not shrunk
From mine own lot, but thou, my child, shouldst move
As a light breeze of heaven, thro' summer-bowers,
And not o'er foaming billows. We are fall'n
On dark and evil days !

Kim. Ay, days, that wake
All to their tasks !—Youth may not loiter now
In the green walks of spring ; and womanhood

Siege of Valencia.

Is summon'd unto conflicts, heretofore
 The lot of warrior-souls. But we will take
 Our toils upon us nobly ! Strength is born
 In the deep silence of long-suffering hearts ;
 Not amidst joy.

Elm. Hast thou some secret woe
 That thus thou speak'st ?

Xim. What sorrow should be mine,
 Unknown to thee ?

Elm. Alas ! the baleful air
 Wherewith the pestilence in darkness walks
 Thro' the devoted city, like a blight
 Amidst the rose-tints of thy cheek hath fall'n,
 And wrought an early withering !—Thou hast cross'd
 The paths of Death, and minister'd to those
 O'er whom his shadow rested, till thine eye
 Hath changed its glancing sunbeam for a still,
 Deep, solemn radiance, and thy brow hath caught
 A wild and high expression, which at times
 Fades unto desolate calmness, most unlike
 What youth's bright mien should wear. My gentle child !
 I look on thee in fear !

Xim. Thou hast no cause
 To fear for me. When the wild clash of steel,
 And the deep tambour, and the heavy step
 Of armed men, break on our morning dreams ;
 When, hour by hour, the noble and the brave
 Are falling round us, and we deem it much
 To give them funeral-rites, and call them blest
 If the good sword, in its own stormy hour,
 Hath done its work upon them, ere disease
 Hath chill'd their fiery blood ;—it is no time
 For the light mien wherewith, in happier hours,
 We trod the woodland mazes, when young leaves
 Were whispering in the gale.—My father comes—
 Oh ! speak of me no more ! I would not shade
 His princely aspect with a thought less high
 Than his proud duties claim.

GONZALEZ enters.

Elm. My noble lord !
 Welcome from this day's toil !—It is the hour
 Whose shadows, as they deepen, bring repose
 Unto all weary men ; and wilt not thou
 Free thy mail'd bosom from the corslet's weight,
 To rest at fall of eve ?

Gon. There may be rest
For the tired peasant, when the vesper-bell
Doth send him to his cabin, and beneath
His vine and olive, he may sit at eve,
Watching his children's sport : but unto *him*
Who keeps the watch-place on the mountain-height,
When Heaven lets loose the storms that chasten realms
—Who speaks of rest ?

Xim. My father, shall I fill
The wine-cup for thy lips, or bring the lute
Whose sounds thou lovest ?

Gon. If there be strains of power
To rouse a spirit which in triumphant scorn
May cast off nature's feebleness, and hold
Its proud career unshackled, dashing down
Tears and fond thoughts to earth—give voice to those
I have need of such, Ximena !—we must hear
No melting music now.

Xim. I know all high
Heroic ditties of the elder time,
Sung by the mountain-Christians,¹ in the holds
Of th' everlasting hills, whose snows yet bear
The print of Freedom's step ; and all wild strains
Wherein the dark serranos * teach the rocks
And the pine forests deeply to resound
The praise of later champions. Wouldst thou hear
The war-song of thine ancestor, the Cid ?

Gon. Ay, speak of him ; for in that name is power,
Such as might rescue kingdoms ! Speak of him !
We are his children ! They that can look back
I' th' annals of their house on such a name,
How should *they* take dishonour by the hand,
And o'er the threshold of their father's halls
First lead her as a guest ?

Elm. Oh, why is this ?
How my heart sinks !

Gon. It must not fail thee yet,
Daughter of heroes !—thine inheritance
Is strength to meet all conflicts. Thou canst number
In thy long line of glorious ancestry
Men, the bright offering of whose blood hath made
The ground it bathed e'en as an altar, whence
High thoughts shall rise for ever. Bore they not,
Midst flame and sword, their witness of the Cross,
With its victorious inspiration girt
As with a conqueror's robe, till th' infidel

* "Serranos," mountaineers

O'erawed, shrank back before them?—Ay, the earth
Doth call them martyrs, but *their* agonies
Were of a moment, tortures whose brief aim
Was to destroy, within whose powers and scope
Lay nought but dust.—And earth doth call them *martyrs* !
Why, Heaven but claim'd their blood, their lives, and not
The things which grow as tendrils round their hearts ;
No, not their children !

Elm. Mean'st thou ?—know'st thou aught ?—
I cannot utter it—My sons ! my sons !
Is it of them ?—Oh ! wouldst thou speak of them ?

Gon. A mother's heart divineth but too well !

Elm. Speak, I adjure thee !—I can bear it all.—
Where are my children ?

Gon. In the Moorish camp
Whose lines have girt the city.

Xim. But they live ?

—All is not lost, my mother !

Elm. Say, they live.

Gon. Elmina, still they live.

Elm. But captives !—They.

Whom my fond heart had imaged to itself
Bounding from cliff to cliff amidst the wilds
Where the rock-eagle seem'd not more secure
In its rejoicing freedom !—And my boys
Are captives with the Moor !—Oh ! how was this

Gon. Alas ! our brave Alphonso, in the pride
Of boyish daring, left our mountain-halls,
With his young brother, eager to behold
The face of noble war. Thence on their way
Were the rash wanderers captured.

Elm. 'Tis enough.—

And when shall they be ransom'd ?

Gon. There is ask'd

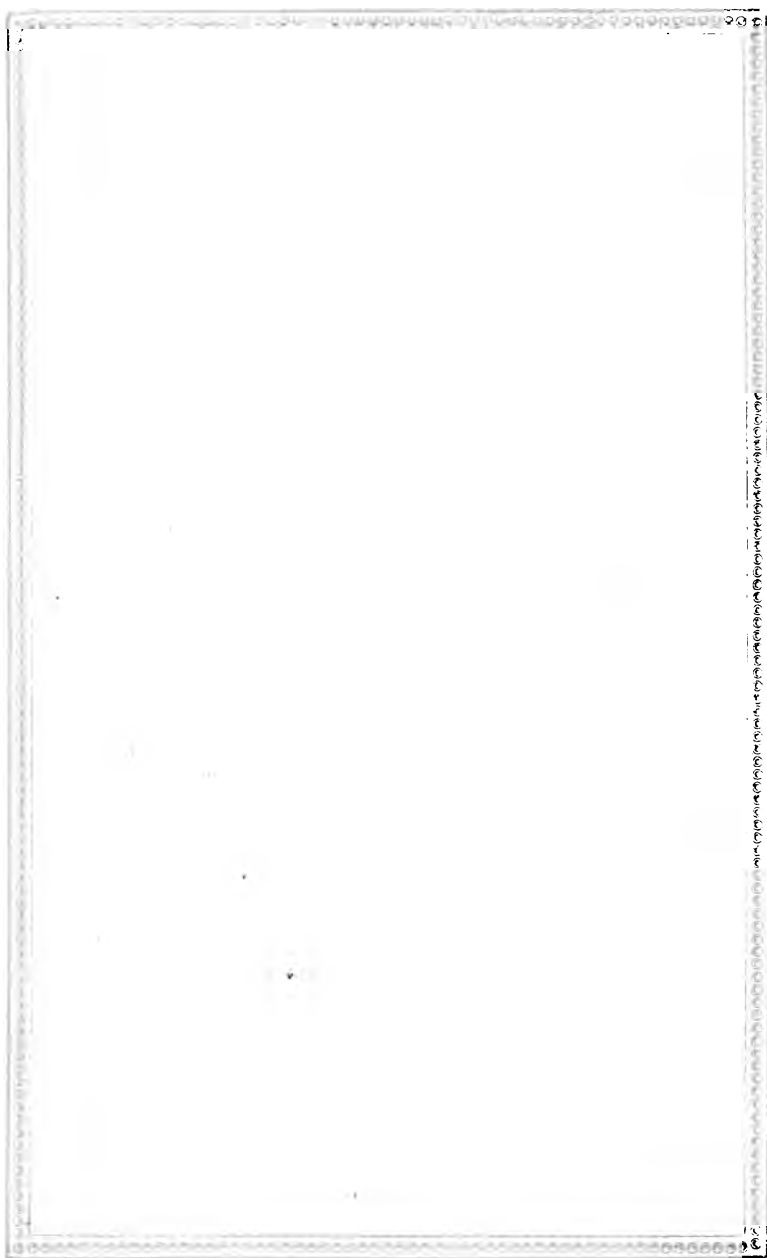
A ransom far too high.

Elm. What ! have we wealth

Which might redeem a monarch, and our sons
The while wear fetters ?—Take thou all for them,
And we will cast our worthless grandeur from us,
As 'twere a cumbrous robe !—Why, *thou* art one,
To whose high nature pomp hath ever been
But as the plumage to a warrior's helm,
Worn or thrown off as lightly. And for me,
Thou knowest not how serenely I could take
The peasant's lot upon me, so my heart,
Amidst its deep affections undisturb'd,
May dwell in silence.



Elmina.—"Speak, I adjure thee!—I can bear it all!
Where are my children?"



Kim. Father ! doubt thou not
But we will bind ourselves to poverty,
With glad devotedness, if this, but this,
May win them back.—Distrust us not, my father
We can bear all things.

Gon. Can ye bear disgrace ?

Kim. We were not *born* for this.

Gon. No, thou sayst well !

Hold to that lofty faith.—My wife, my child !
Hath earth no treasures richer than the gems
Torn from her secret caverns ?—If by them
Chains may be riven, then let the captive spring
Rejoicing to the light !—But he, for whom
Freedom and life may but be worn with shame,
Hath nought to do, save fearlessly to fix
His steadfast look on the majestic heavens,
And proudly die !

Elm. Gonzalez, *who* must die ?

Gon. (hurriedly). They on whose lives a fearful price is set,
But to be paid by treason !—Is't enough ?
Or must I yet seek words ?

Elm. That look saith more !

Thou canst not mean——

Gon. I do ! why dwells there not
Power in a glance to speak it ?—They must die !
They—must their names be told—*Our sons* must die
Unless I yield the city !

Kim. Oh ! look up !

My mother, sink not thus !—Until the grave
Shut from our sight its victims, there is hope.

Elm. (in a low voice). Whose knell was in the breeze ?—No,
no, not *theirs* !

Whose was the blessed voice that spoke of hope ?
—And there *is* hope !—I will not be subdued—
I will not hear a whisper of despair !
For Nature is all-powerful, and her breath
Moves like a quickening spirit o'er the depths
Within a father's heart.—Thou too, Gonzalez,
Wilt tell me there is hope !

Gon. (solemnly). Hope but in Him
Who bade the patriarch lay his fair young son
Bound on the shrine of sacrifice, and when
The bright steel quiver'd in the father's hand
Just raised to strike, sent forth his awful voice
Through the still clouds, and on the breathless air,
Commanding to withhold !—Earth has no hope :
It rests with Him.

Elm. Thou canst not tell me this !
 Thou father of my sons, within whose hands
 Doth lie thy children's fate.

Gon. If there have been
 Men in whose bosoms Nature's voice hath made
 Its accents as the solitary sound
 Of an o'erpowering torrent, silencing
 Th' austere and yet divine remonstrances
 Whisper'd by faith and honour, lift thy hands,
 And, to that Heaven which arms the brave with strength,
 Pray, that the father of thy sons may ne'er
 Be thus found wanting !

Elm. Then their doom is seal'd ?
 Thou wilt not save thy children ?

Gon. Hast thou cause,
 Wife of my youth ! to deem it lies within
 The bounds of possible things, that I should link
 My name to that word—*traitor* ?—They that sleep
 On their proud battle-fields, thy sires and mine,
 Died not for this !

Elm. Oh, cold and hard of heart !
 Thou shouldst be born for empire, since thy soul
 Thus lightly from all human bonds can free
 Its haughty flight !—Men ! men ! too much is yours
 Of vantage ; ye, that with a sound, a breath,
 A shadow, thus can fill the desolate space
 Of rooted up affections, o'er whose void
 Our yearning hearts must wither !—So it is,
 Dominion must be won !—Nay, leave me not—
 My heart is bursting, and I *must* be heard !
 Heaven hath given power to mortal agony
 As to the elements in their hour of might
 And mastery o'er creation !—Who shall dare
 To mock that fearful strength ?—I *must* be heard !
 Give me my sons !

Gon. That they may live to hide
 With covering hands th' indignant flush of shame
 On their young brows, when men shall speak of him
 They call'd their father !—Was the oath, whereby,
 On th' altar of my faith, I bound myself,
 With an unswerving spirit to maintain
 This free and Christian city for my God
 And for my king, a writing traced on sand ?
 That passionate tears should wash it from the earth,
 Or e'en the life-drops of a bleeding heart
 Efface it, as a billow sweeps away
 The last light vessel's wake ?—Then never more

Let man's deep vows be trusted !—though enforced
By all th' appeals of high remembrances,
And silent claims o' th' sepulchres, wherein
His fathers with the'r stainless glory sleep,
On their good swords ! Thinkst thou I feel no pangs ?
He that hath given me sons, doth know the heart
Whose treasure she recalls.—Of this no more.
'Tis vain. I tell thee that th' inviolate cross
Still, from our ancient temples, must look up
Through the blue heavens of Spain, though at its foot
I perish, with my race. Thou *darest* not ask
That I, the son of warriors—men who died
To fix it on that proud supremacy—
Should tear the sign of our victorious faith
From its high place of sunbeams, for the Moor
In impious joy to trample !

Elm. Scorn me not

In mine extreme of misery !—Thou art strong—
Thy heart is not as mine.—My brain grows wild ;
I know not what I ask !—And yet 'twere but
Anticipating fate—since it must fall,
That cross *must* fall at last ! There is no power,
No hope within this city of the grave,
To keep its place on high. Her sultry air
Breathes heavily of death, her warriors sink
Beneath their ancient banners, ere the Moor
Hath bent his bow against them ; for the shaft
Of pestilence flies more swiftly to its mark,
Than the arrow of the desert. E'en the skies
O'erhang the desolate splendour of her domes
With an ill omen's aspect, shaping forth,
From the dull clouds, wild menacing forms and signs
Foreboding ruin. *Man* might be withstood,
But who shall cope with famine and disease,
When leagued with armed foes ?—Where now the aid,
Where the long-promised lances of Castile ?—
We are forsaken, in our utmost need,
By Heaven and earth forsaken !

Gon. If this be,

(And yet I will not deem it) we must fall
As men that in severe devotedness
Have chosen their part, and bound themselves to death,
Through high conviction that their suffering land,
By the free blood of martyrdom alone,
Shall call deliverance down.

Elm. Oh ! I have stood
Beside thee through the beating storms of life.

With the true heart of unrepining love,
 As the poor peasant's mate doth cheerily,
 In the parch'd vineyard, or the harvest-field,
 Bearing her part, sustain with him the heat
 And burden of the day ;—but now the hour,
 The heavy hour is come, when human strength
 Sinks down, a toil-worn pilgrim, in the dust,
 Owning that woe is mightier !—Spare me yet
 This bitter cup, my husband !—Let not her,
 The mother of the lovely, sit and mourn
 In her unpeopled home, a broken stem,
 O'er its fall'n roses dying !

Gon. Urge me not,
 Thou that through all sharp conflicts hast been found
 Worthy a brave man's love, oh ! urge me not
 To guilt, which through the midst of blinding tears,
 In its own hues thou seest not !—Death may scarce
 Bring aught like this !

Elm. All, all thy gentle race,
 The beautiful beings that around thee grew,
 Creatures of sunshine ! Wilt thou doom them all ?
 —She too, thy daughter—doth her smile unmark'd
 Pass from thee, with its radiance, day by day ?
 Shadows are gathering round her—seest thou not ?
 The misty dimness of the spoiler's breath
 Hangs o'er her beauty, and the face which made
 The summer of our hearts, now doth but send,
 With every glance, deep bodings through the soul,
 Telling of early fate.

Gon. I see a change
 Far nobler on her brow !—She is as one,
 Who, at the trumpet's sudden call, hath risen
 From the gay banquet, and in scorn cast down
 The wine-cup, and the garland, and the lute
 Of festal hours, for the good spear and helm,
 Beseeming sterner tasks.—Her eye hath lost
 The beam which laugh'd upon th' awakening heart,
 E'en as morn breaks o'er earth. But far within
 Its full dark orb, a light hath sprung, whose source
 Lies deeper in the soul.—And let the torch
 Which but illumed the glittering pageant, fade !
 The alter-flame, i' th' sanctuary's recess,
 Burns quenchless, being of heaven !—She hath put on
 Courage, and faith, and generous constancy,
 E'en as a breastplate.—Ay, men look on her,
 As she goes forth serenely to her tasks,
 Binding the warrior's wounds, and bearing fresh

Cool draughts to fever'd lips ; they look on her
Thus moving in her beautiful array
Of gentle fortitude, and bless the fair
Majestic vision, and un murmuring turn
Unto their heavy toils.

Elm. And seest thou not
In that high faith and strong collectedness,
A fearful inspiration ?—*They* have cause
To tremble, who behold th' unearthly light
Of high, and, it may be, prophetic thought,
Investing youth with grandeur !—From the grave
It rises, on whose shadowy brink thy child
Waits but a father's hand to snatch her back
Into the laughing sunshine.—Kneel with me,
Ximena, kneel beside me, and implore
That which a deeper, more prevailing voice
Than ours doth ask, and will not be denied,—
His children's lives !

Xim. Alas ! this may not be,
Mother !—I cannot.

[*Exit XIMENA*]

Gon. My heroic child !—
A terrible sacrifice thou claim'st, O God !
From creatures in whose agonizing hearts
Nature is strong as death !

Elm. Is't thus in thine ?
Away !—what time is given thee to resolve
On !—what I cannot utter !—Speak thou know'st
Too well what I would say.

Gon. Until—ask not !
The time is brief.

Elm. Thou saidst—I heard not right—

Gon. The time is brief.

Elm. What ! must we burst all ties
Wherewith the thrilling chords of life are twined ;
And, for this task's fulfilment, can it be
That man, in his cold heartlessness, hath dared
To number and to mete us forth the sands
Of hours—nay, moments ?—Why, the sentenced wretch,
He on whose soul there rests a brother's blood
Pour'd forth in slumber, is allow'd more time
To wean his turbulent passions from the world
His presence doth pollute !—It is not thus !
We must have Time to school us.

Gon. We have but
To bow the head in silence, when Heaven's voice
Calls back the things we love.

Elm. Love ! love !—there are soft smiles and gentle words,

And there are faces, skilful to put on
 The look we trust in—and 'tis mockery all !
 —A faithless mist, a desert-vapour, wearing
 The brightness of clear waters, thus to cheat
 The thirst that semblance kindled !—There is none.
 In all this cold and hollow world, no fount
 Of deep, strong, deathless love, save that within
 A mother's heart.—It is but pride, wherewith
 To his fair son the father's eye doth turn,
 Watching his growth. Aye, on the boy he looks,
 The bright glad creature springing in his path,
 But as the heir of his great name, the young
 And stately tree, whose rising strength ere long
 Shall bear his trophies well.—And this is love !
 This is *man's* love !—What marvel ?—*You ne'er made*
 Your breast the pillow of his infancy,
 While to the fulness of your heart's glad heavings
 His fair cheek rose and fell ; and his bright hair
 Waved softly to your breath !—*You ne'er kept watch*
 Beside him, till the last pale star had set,
 And morn all dazling, as in triumph, broke
 On your dim weary eye ; not *yours* the face
 Which, early faded thro' fond care for him,
 Hung o'er his sleep, and, duly as Heaven's light,
 Was there to greet his wakening ! *You ne'er smooth'd*
 His couch, ne'er sang him to his rosy rest,
 Caught his least whisper, when his voice from yours
 Had learn'd soft utterance ; press'd your lip to his,
 When fever parch'd it ; hush'd his wayward cries,
 With patient, vigilant, never-wearied love !
 No ! these are *woman's* tasks !—In these her youth,
 And bloom of cheek, and buoyancy of heart
 Steal from her all unmark'd !—My boys ! my boys !
 Hath vain affection borne with all for this ?
 —Why were ye given me ?

Gon. Is there strength in man
 Thus to endure ?—That thou couldst read, thro' all
 Its depths of silent agony, the heart
 Thy voice of woe doth rend !

Elm. Thy heart !—*thy* heart !—Away ! it feels not now !
 But an hour comes to tame the mighty man
 Unto the infant's weakness ; nor shall Heaven
 Spare you that bitter chastening !—May you live
 To be alone, when loneliness doth seem
 Most heavy to sustain !—For me, my voice
 Of prayer and fruitless weeping shall be soon
 With all forgotten sounds ; my quiet place

Low with my lovely ones, and we shall sleep,
 Tho' kings lead armies o'er us, we shall sleep,
 Wrapt in earth's covering mantle !—you the while
 Shall sit within your vast, forsaken halls,
 And hear the wild and melancholy winds
 Moan thro' their drooping banners, never more
 To wave above your race. Aye, then call up
 Shadows—dim phantoms from ancestral tombs,
 But all—all *glorious*—conquerors, chieftains, kings—
 To people that cold void !—And when the strength
 From your right arm hath melted, when the blast
 Of the shrill clarion gives your heart no more
 A fiery waking ; if at last you pine
 For the glad voices, and the bounding steps,
 Once thro' your home re-echoing, and the clasp
 Of twining arms, and all the joyous light
 Of eyes that laugh'd with youth, and made your board
 A place of sunshine ;—When those days are come,
 Then in your utter desolation, turn
 To the cold world, the smiling, faithless world,
 Which hath swept past you long, and bid it quench
 Your soul's deep thirst with *fame* ! immortal *fame* !
 Fame to the sick of heart !—a gorgeous robe,
 A crown of victory, unto him that dies
 I' th' burning waste, for water !

Gon. This from *thee* !

Now the last drop of bitterness is pour'd.

Elmina—I forgive thee !

[*Exit* ELMINA.]

Aid me, Heaven !

From whom alone is power !—Oh ! thou hast set
 Duties, so stern of aspect, in my path,
 They almost, to my startled gaze, assume
 The hue of things less hallow'd ! Men have sunk
 Unblamed beneath such trials !—Doth not He
 Who made us know the limits of our strength ?
 My wife ! my sons !—Away ! I must not pause
 To give my heart one moment's mastery thus !

[*Exit* GONZALEZ]

SCENE—*The Aisle of a Gothic Church.*

HERNANDEZ, GARCIA, and others.

Her. The rites are closed. Now, valiant men, depart,
 Each to his place—I may not say, of rest ;
 Your faithful vigils for your sons may win

What must not be your own. Ye are as those
Who sow, in peril and in care, the seed
Of the fair tree, beneath whose stately shade
They may not sit. But bless'd be they who toil
For after-days !—All high and holy thoughts
Be with you, warriors, thro' the lingering hours
Of the night-watch !

Gar. Aye, father ! we have need
Of high and holy thoughts, wherewith to fence
Our hearts against despair. Yet have I been
From youth a son of war. The stars have look'd
A thousand times upon my couch of heath,
Spread midst the wild sierras, by some stream
Whose dark-red waves look'd e'en as tho' their source
Lay not in rocky caverns, but the veins
Of noble hearts ; while many a knightly crest
Roll'd with them to the deep. And in the years
Of my long exile and captivity,
With the fierce Arab, I have watch'd beneath
The still, pale shadow of some lonely palm,
At midnight, in the desert ; while the wind
Swell'd with the lion's roar, and heavily
The fearfulness and might of solitude
Press'd on my weary heart.

Her. (thoughtfully). Thou little know'st
Of what is solitude !—I tell thee, those
For whom—in earth's remotest nook—howe'er
Divided from their path by chain on chain
Of mighty mountains, and the amplitude
Of rolling seas—there beats one human heart,
There breathes one being unto whom their name
Comes with a thrilling and a gladdening sound
Heard o'er the din of life ! are not alone !
Not on the deep, nor in the wild, alone ;
For there is that on earth with which they hold
A brotherhood of soul !—Call *him* alone,
Who stands shut out from this !—And let not those
Whose homes are bright with sunshine and with love,
Put on the insolence of happiness,
Glorying in that proud lot !—A lonely hour
Is on its way to each, to all ; for Death
Knows no companionship.

Gar. I have look'd on Death
In field, and storm, and flood. But never yet
Hath aught weigh'd down my spirit to a mood
Of sadness, dreaming o'er dark auguries,
Like this, our watch by midnight. Fearful things

Are gathering round us. Death upon the earth,
Omens in Heaven !—The summer-skies put forth
No clear bright stars above us, but at times,
Catching some comet's fiery hue of wrath,
Marshal their clouds to armies, traversing
Heaven with the rush of meteor-steeds, the array
Of spears and banners, tossing like the pines
Of Pyrenean forests, when the storm
Doth sweep the mountains.

Her. Aye, last night I too
Kept vigil, gazing on the angry heavens ;
And I beheld the meeting and the shock
Of those wild hosts i' th' air, when, as they closed,
A red and sultry mist, like that which mantles
The thunder's path, fell o'er them. Then were flung
Thro' the dull glare, broad cloudy banners forth,
And chariots seem'd to whirl, and steeds to sink,
Bearing down crested warriors. But all this
Was dim and shadowy ;—then swift darkness rush'd
Down on th' unearthly battle, as the deep
Swept o'er the Egyptian's armament.—I look'd—
And all that fiery field of plumes and spears
Was blotted from heaven's face !—I look'd again—
And from the brooding mass of cloud leap'd forth
One meteor-sword, which o'er the reddening sea
Shook with strange motion, such as earthquakes give
Unto a rocking citadel !—I beheld,
And yet my spirit sunk not.

Gar. Neither deem
That mine hath blench'd.—But these are sights and sounds
To awe the firmest.—Knows't thou what we hear
At midnight from the walls ?—Were't but the deep
Barbaric horn, or Moorish tambour's peal,
Thence might the warrior's heart catch impulses,
Quickening its fiery currents. But our ears
Are pierced by other tones. We hear the knell
For brave men in their noon of strength cut down,
And the shrill wail of woman, and the dirge
Faint swelling thro' the streets. Then e'en the air
Hath strange and fitful murmurs of lament,
As if the viewless watchers of the land
Sigh'd on its hollow breezes !—To my soul,
The torrent-rush of battle, with its din
Of trampling steeds and ringing panoply,
Were, after these faint sounds of drooping woe,
As the free sky's glad music unto him
Who leaves a couch of sickness.

Her. (with solemnity). If to plunge
 In the mid-waves of combat, as they bear
 Chargers and spearmen onwards ; and to make
 A reckless bosom's front the buoyant mark
 On that wild current, for ten thousand arrows ;
 If *thus* to dare were valour's noblest aim,
 Lightly might fame be won !—but there are things
 Which ask a spirit of more exalted pitch,
 And courage temper'd with a holier fire !
 Well mayst thou say, that these are fearful times,
 Therefore be firm, be patient !—There is strength,
 And a fierce instinct, e'en in common souls,
 To bear up manhood with a stormy joy,
 When red swords meet in lightning !—But our task
 Is more, and nobler !—We have to endure,
 And to keep watch, and to arouse a land,
 And to defend an altar !—If we fall,
 So that our blood make but the millionth part
 Of Spain's great ransom, we may count it joy
 To die upon her bosom, and beneath
 The banner of her faith !—Think but on this,
 And gird your hearts with silent fortitude,
 Suffering, yet hoping all things—Fare ye well.

Gar. Father, farewell. [*Exeunt GARCÍAS and his followers.*]

Her. These men have earthly ties
 And bondage on their natures !—To the cause
 Of God, and Spain's revenge, they bring but half
 Their energies and hopes. But he whom Heaven
 Hath call'd to be th' awakener of a land,
 Should have his soul's affections all absorb'd
 In that majestic purpose, and press on
 To its fulfilment, as a mountain-born
 And mighty stream, with all its vassal-rills
 Sweeps proudly to the ocean, pausing not
 To dally with the flowers.

Hark ! What quick step
 Comes hurrying through the gloom at this dead hour ?

'ELMINA enters.

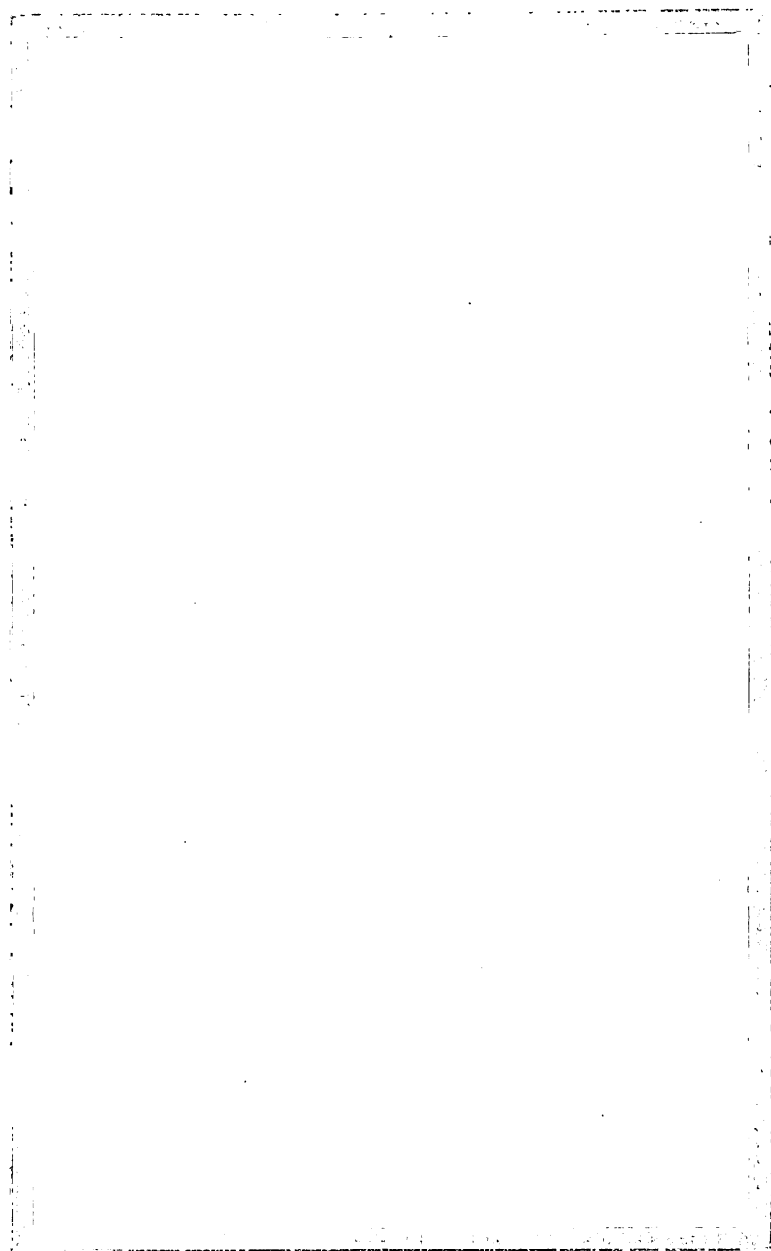
Elm. Are not all hours as one to misery ?—Why
 Should *she* take note of time, for whom the day
 And night have lost their blessed attributes
 Of sunshine and repose ?

Her. I know thy griefs ;
 But there are trials for the noble heart
 Wherein its own deep fountains must supply
 All it can hope of comfort. Pity's voice



Elmina.—"Father! I ask thine aid."

[p. 77.]



Comes with vain sweetness to th' unheeding ear
Of anguish, e'en as music heard afar
On the green shore, by him who perishes
Midst rocks and eddying waters.

Elm. Think thou not
I sought thee but for pity. I am come
For that which grief is privileged to demand
With an imperious claim, from all whose form,
Whose human form, doth seal them unto suffering!
Father! I ask thine aid.

Her. There is no aid
For thee or for thy children, but with Him,
Whose presence is around us in the cloud,
As in the shining and the glorious light.

Elm. There is no aid!—Art thou a man of God?
Art thou a man of sorrow—(for the world
Doth call thee such)—and hast thou not been taught
By God and sorrow—mighty as they are,
To own the claims of misery?

Her. Is there power
With me to save thy sons?—Implore of Heaven!

Elm. Doth not Heaven work its purposes by man?
I tell thee, *thou* canst save them!—Art thou not
Gonzalez' counsellor?—Unto him thy words
Are e'en as oracles—

Her. And therefore?—Speak!
The noble daughter of Pelayo's line
Hath nought to ask, unworthy of the name
Which is a nation's heritage.—Dost thou shrink?

Elm. Have pity on me, father!—I must speak
That, from the thought of which, but yesterday,
I had recoil'd in scorn!—But this is past.
Oh! we grow humble in our agonies,
And to the dust—their birth-place—bow the heads
That wore the crown of glory!—I am weak—
My chastening is far more than I can bear.

Her. These are no times for weakness. On our hills
The ancient cedars, in their gather'd might,
Are battling with the tempest; and the flower
Which cannot meet its driving blast must die.—
But thou hast drawn thy nurture from a stem
Unwont to bend or break.—Lift thy proud head,
Daughter of Spain?—What wouldst thou with thy lord?

Elm. Look not upon me thus!—I have no power
To tell thee. Take thy keen disdainful eye
Off from my soul!—What! am I sunk to this?
I, whose blood sprung from heroes!—How my sons

Will scorn the mother that would bring disgrace
 On their majestic line !—My sons ! my sons !—
 Now is all else forgotten !—I had once
 A babe that in the early spring-time lay
 Sickening upon my bosom, till at last,
 When earth's young flowers were opening to the sun,
 Death sunk on his meek eyelid, and I deem'd
 All sorrow light to mine !—But now the fate
 Of all my children seems to brood above me
 In the dark thunder-clouds !—Oh ! I have power
 And voice unfaltering now to speak my prayer
 And my last lingering hope, that thou shouldst win
 The father to relent, to save his sons !

Her. By yielding up the city ?

Elm. Rather say

By meeting that which gathers close upon us
 Perchance one day the sooner !—Is't not so ?
 Must we not yield at last ?—How long shall man
 Array his single breast against disease,
 And famine, and the sword ?

Her. How long ?—While he,
 Who shadows forth his power more gloriously
 In the high deeds and sufferings of the soul,
 Than in the circling heavens, with all their stars,
 Or the far-sounding deep, doth send abroad
 A spirit, which takes affliction for its mate,
 In the good cause, with solemn joy !—How long ?—
 And who art *thou*, that, in the littleness
 Of thine own selfish purpose, wouldst set bounds
 To the free current of all noble thought
 And generous action, bidding its bright waves
 Be stay'd, and flow no further ?—But the Power
 Whose interdict is laid on seas and orbs,
 To chain them in from wandering, hath assign'd
 No limits unto that which man's high strength
 Shall, through its aid, achieve !

Elm. Oh ! there are times,
 When *all* that hopeless courage can achieve
 But sheds a mournful beauty o'er the fate
 Of those who die in vain.

Her. Who dies in vain
 Upon his country's war-fields, and within
 The shadow of her altars ?—Feeble heart !
 I tell thee that the voice of noble blood,
 Thus pour'd for faith and freedom, hath a tone
 Which, from the night of ages, from the gulf
 Of death, shall burst, and make its high appeal

Sound unto earth and heaven ! Aye, let the land,
Whose sons, through centuries of woe, have striven,
And perish'd by her temples, sink awhile,
Borne down in conflict !—But immortal seed
Deep, by heroic suffering, hath been sown
On all her ancient hills ; and generous hope
Knows that the soil, in its good time, shall yet
Bring forth a glorious harvest !—Earth receives
Not one red drop, from faithful hearts, in vain.

Elm. Then it must be !—And ye will make those lives,
Those young bright lives, an offering—to retard
Our doom one day !

Her. The mantle of that day
May wrap the fate of Spain !

Elm. What led me here ?
Why did I turn to *thee* in my despair ?
Love hath no ties upon thee ; what had I
To hope from *thee*, thou lone and childless man !
Go to thy silent home !—there no young voice
Shall bid thee welcome, no light footstep spring
Forth at the sound of thine !—What knows thy heart ?

Her. Woman ! how dar'st thou taunt me with my woes ?

Thy children too shall perish, and I say
It shall be well !—Why tak'st thou thought for them ?
Wearing thy heart, and wasting down thy life
Unto it's dregs, and making night thy time
Of care yet more intense, and casting health,
Unpriz'd, to melt away, i' th' bitter cup
Thou minglest for thyself ?—Why, what hath earth
To pay thee back for this ?—Shall they not live,
(If the sword spare them now) to prove how soon
All love may be forgotten ?—Years of thought,
Long faithful watchings, looks of tenderness,
That changed not, though to change be this world's law ?
Shall they not flush thy cheek with shame, whose blood
Marks, e'en like branding iron ?—to thy sick heart
Make death a want, as sleep to weariness ?
Doth not all hope end thus ?—or e'en at best,
Will they not leave thee ?—far from thee seek room
For th' overflowings of their fiery souls,
On life's wide ocean ?—Give the bounding steed,
Or the wing'd bark to youth, that his free course
May be o'er hills and seas : and weep thou not
In thy forsaken home, for the bright world
Lies all before him, and be sure he wastes
No thought on thee !

Elm. Not so ! it is not so !

Thou dost but torture me !—*My* sons are kind,
And brave, and gentle.

Her. Others too have worn
The semblance of all good. Nay, stay thee yet ;
I will be calm, and thou shalt learn how earth,
The fruitful in all agonies, hath woes
Which far outweigh thine own.

Elm. It may not be !

Whose grief is like a mother's for her sons ?

Her. *My* son lay stretch'd upon his battle-bier,
And there were hands wrung o'er him, which had caught
Their hue from his young blood !

Elm. What tale is this ?

Her. Read you no records in this mien, of things
Whose traces on man's aspect are not such
As the breeze leaves on water ?—Lofty birth,
War, peril, power ?—Affliction's hand is strong,
If it erase the haughty characters
They grave so deep !—I have not always been
That which I am. The name I bore is not
Of those which perish !—I was once a chief—
A warrior !—nor as now, a lonely man !
I was a father !

Elm. Then thy heart can feel !

Thou wilt have pity !

Her. Should I pity thee ?

Thy sons will perish gloriously—their blood ———

Elm. Their blood ! my children's blood !—thou speak'st as
'twere

Of casting down a wine-cup, in the mirth
And wantonness of feasting !—*My* fair boys !—
Man ! hast *thou* been a father ?

Her. Let them die !

Let them die *now*, thy children ! so thy heart
Shall wear their beautiful image all undimm'd,
Within it, to the last ! Nor shalt thou learn
The bitter lesson, of what worthless dust
Are framed the idols, whose false glory binds
Earth's fetters on our souls !—Thou think'st it much
To mourn the early dead ; but there are tears
Heavy with deeper anguish ! We endow
Those whom we love, in our fond passionate blindness,
With power upon our souls, too absolute
To be a mortal's trust ! Within their hands
We lay the flaming sword, whose stroke alone
Can reach our hearts, and *they* are merciful,
As *they* are strong, that wield it not to pierce us !—

Aye, fear them, fear the loved !—Had I but wept
O'er my son's grave, as o'er a babe's, where tears
Are as spring dew-drops, glittering in the sun,
And brightening the young verdure, / might still
Have loved and trusted !

Elm. (disdainfully). But he fell in war !
And hath not glory medicine in her cup
For the brief pangs of nature ?

Her. Glory !—Peace,
And listen !— By my side the stripling grew,
Last of my line. I rear'd him to take joy
I' th' blaze of arms, as eagles train their young
To look upon the day-king !—His quick blood
Ev'n to his boyish cheek would mantle up,
When the heavens rang with trumpets, and his eye
Flash with the spirit of a race whose deeds—
But this availeth not !— Yet he *was* brave.
I've seen him clear himself a path in fight
As lightning through a forest, and his plume
Waved like a torch, above the battle-storm,
The soldier's guide, when princely crests had sunk,
And banners were struck down.—Around my steps
Floated his fame, like music, and I lived
But in the lofty sound. But when my heart
In one frail ark had ventur'd all, when most
He seem'd to stand between my soul and heaven,—
Then came the thunder-stroke !

Elm. 'Tis ever thus !
And the unquiet and foreboding sense
That thus 'twill ever be, doth link itself
Darkly with all deep love !—He died ?

Her. Not so !—
Death ! Death !—Why, earth should be a paradise,
To make that name so fearful !—Had he died,
With his young fame about him for a shroud,
I had not learn'd the might of agony,
To bring proud natures low !—No ! he fell off—
Why do I tell thee this ?—What right hast thou
To learn how pass'd the glory from my house ?
Yet listen !—He forsook me !—He, that was
As mine own soul, forsook me ! trampled o'er
The ashes of his sires !—Aye, leagued himself
E'en with the infidel, the curse of Spain,
And, for the dark eye of a Moorish maid,
Abjured his faith, his God !—Now talk of death !

Elm. Oh ! I can pity thee——

Her. There's more to hear.

I braced the corslet o'er my heart's deep wound,
And cast my troubled spirit on the tide
Of war and high events, whose stormy waves
Might bear it up from sinking ;——

Elm. And ye met

No more ?

Her. Be still !—We did !—we met *once* more.

God had his own high purpose to fulfil,
Or think'st thou that the sun in his bright heaven
Had look'd upon such things ?—We met *once* more. —
That was an hour to leave its lightning-mark
Sear'd upon brain and bosom !—there had been
Combat on Ebro's banks, and when the day
Sank in red clouds, it faded from a field
Still held by Moorish lances. Night closed round,
A night of sultry darkness, in the shadow
Of whose broad wing, ev'n unto death I strove
Long with a turban'd champion ; but my sword
Was heavy with God's vengeance—and prevail'd.
He fell—my heart exulted—and I stood
In gloomy triumph o'er him—Nature gave
No sign of horror, for 'twas Heaven's decree !
He strove to speak—but I had done the work
Of wrath too well—yet in his last deep moan
A dreadful something of familiar sound
Came o'er my shuddering sense.—The moon look'd forth,
And I beheld—speak not !—'twas he—my son !
My boy lay dying there ! He raised one glance,
And knew me—for he sought with feeble hand
To cover his glazed eyes. A darker veil
Sank o'er them soon.—I will not have thy look
Fix'd on me thus !—Away !

Elm. Thou hast seen this,

Thou hast *done* this—and yet thou liv'st ?

Her. I live !

And know'st thou wherefore ?—On my soul there fell
A horror of great darkness, which shut out
All earth, and heaven, and hope. I cast away
The spear and helm, and made the cloister's shade
The home of my despair. But a deep voice
Came to me through the gloom, and sent its tones
Far through my bosom's depths. And I awoke,
Aye, as the mountain cedar doth shake off
Its weight of wintry snow, e'en so I shook
Despondence from my soul, and knew myself
Seal'd by that blood wherewith my hands were dyed,
And set apart, and fearfully mark'd out

Unto a mighty task !—To rouse the soul
Of Spain, as from the dead : and to lift up
The cross, her sign of victory, on the hills,
Gathering her sons to battle !—And my voice
Must be as freedom's trumpet on the winds,
From Roncesvalles to the blue sea-waves
Where Calpe looks on Afric ; till the land
Have fill'd her cup of vengeance !—Ask me *now*
To yield the Christian city, that its fanes
May rear the minaret in the face of Heaven !—
But death shall have a bloodier vintage-feast
Ere that day come !

Elm. I ask thee this no more,
For I am hopeless now.—But yet one boon—
Hear me, by all thy woes !—Thy voice hath power
Through the wide city—here I cannot rest :—
Aid me to pass the gates !

Her. And wherefore ?

Elm. Thou,
That wert a father, and art now—alone !
Canst *thou* ask “ wherefore ? ”—Ask the wretch whose sands
Have not an hour to run, whose failing limbs
Have but one earthly journey to perform,
Why, on his pathway to the place of death,
Aye, when the very axe is glistening cold
Upon his dizzy sight, his pale, parch'd lip
Implores a cup of water ?—Why, the stroke
Which trembles o'er him in itself shall bring
Oblivion of all wants, yet who denies
Nature's last prayer ?—I tell thee that the thirst
Which burns my spirit up is agony
To be endured no more !—And I *must* look
Upon my children's faces, I must hear
Their voices, ere they perish !—But hath Heaven
Decreed that they *must* perish ?—Who shall say
If in yon Moslem camp there beats no heart
Which prayers and tears may melt ?

Her. There !—with the Moor !
Let him fill up the measure of his guilt !—
'Tis madness all !—How wouldst thou pass th' array
Of armed foes ?

Elm. Oh ! free doth sorrow pass,
Free and unquestion'd, through a suffering world !²

Her. This must not be. Enough of woe is laid
E'en now, upon my lord's heroic soul,
For man to bear, unsinking. Press thou not
Too heavily th' o'erburthen'd heart.—Away !

Bow down the knee, and send thy prayers for strength
Up to Heaven's gate.—Farewell ! [Exit HERNANDEZ.]

Elm. Are all men thus ?—

Why, wer't not better they should fall e'en now
Than live to shut their hearts, in haughty scorn,
Against the sufferer's pleadings ?—But no, no !
Who can be like *this* man, that slew his son,
Yet wears his life still proudly, and a soul
Untamed upon his brow ?

(After a pause.)

There's one, whose arms
Have borne my children in their infancy,
And on whose knees they sported, and whose hand
Hath led them oft—a vassal of their sire's ;
And I will seek him : he may lend me aid,
When all beside pass on.

DIRGE HEARD WITHOUT.

Thou to thy rest art gone,
High heart ! and what are we,
While o'er our heads the storm sweeps on,
That we should mourn for thee ?

Free grave and peaceful bier
To the buried son of Spain !
To those that live, the lance and spear,
And well if not the chain !

Be *theirs* to weep the dead
As they sit beneath their vines,
Whose flowery land hath borne no tread
Of spoilers o'er its shrines !

Thou hast thrown off the load
Which we must yet sustain,
And pour our blood where *thine* hath flow'd,
Too blest if not in vain !

We give thee holy rite,
Slow knell, and chaunted strain !—
For those that fall to-morrow night,
May be left no funeral-train.

Again, when trumpets wake,
We must brace our armour on ;
But a deeper note *thy* sleep must break—
Thou to thy rest art gone !

Happier in *this* than all,
That, now thy race is run,
Upon thy name no stain may fall,
Thy work hath well been done !

Elm. "Thy work hath well been done !"—so thou may'st
rest !—
There is a solemn lesson in those words—
But now I may not pause. [Exit ELMINA.]

SCENE—*A Street in the City.*

HERNANDEZ, GONZALEZ.

Her. Would they not hear ?

Gon. They heard, as one that stands
By the cold grave which hath but newly closed
O'er his last friend, doth hear some passer-by
Bid him be comforted !—Their hearts have died
Within them !—We must perish, not as those
That fall when battle's voice doth shake the hills,
And peal through Heaven's great arch, but silently,
And with a wasting of the spirit down,
A quenching, day by day, of some bright spark,
Which lit us on our toils !—Reproach me not ;
My soul is darken'd with a heavy cloud—
Yet fear not I shall yield !

Her. Breathe not the word,
Save in proud scorn !—Each bitter day, o'erpass'd
By slow endurance, is a triumph won
For Spain's red cross. And be of trusting heart !
A few brief hours, and those that turn'd away
In cold despondence, shrinking from your voice,
May crowd around their leader, and demand
To be array'd for battle. We must watch
For the swift impulse, and await its time,
As the bark waits the ocean's. You have chos'er
To kindle up their souls, an hour, perchance,
When they were weary ; they had cast aside

Their arms to slumber ; or a knell, just then
 With its deep hollow tone, had made the blood
 Creep shuddering through their veins ; or they had caught
 A glimpse of some new meteor, and shaped forth
 Strange omens from its blaze.

Gon. Alas ! the cause
 Lies deeper in their misery !—I have seen,
 In my night's course through this beleaguer'd city
 Things, whose remembrance doth not pass away
 As vapours from the mountains.—There were some,
 That sat beside their dead, with eyes, wherein
 Grief had ta'en place of sight, and shut out all
 But its own ghastly object. To my voice
 Some answer'd with a fierce and bitter laugh,
 As men whose agonies were made to pass
 The bounds of sufferance, by some reckless word,
 Dropt from the light of spirit.—Others lay—
 Why should I tell thee, father ! how despair
 Can bring the lofty brow of manhood down
 Unto the very dust ?—And yet for this,
 Fear not that I embrace my doom—Oh God !
 That 'twere *my* doom alone !—with less of fix'd
 And solemn fortitude.—Lead on, prepare
 The holiest rites of faith, that I by them
 Once more may consecrate my sword, my life,—
 But what are these ?—Who hath not dearer lives
 Twined with his own ?—I shall be lonely soon—
 Childless !—Heaven wills it so. Let us begone.
 Perchance before the shrine my heart may beat
 With a less troubled motion.

[*Exeunt GONZALEZ and HERNANDEZ.*]

SCENE—*A Tent in the Moorish Camp.*

ABDULLAH, ALPHONSO, CARLOS.

Abd. These are bold words : but hast thou looked on death,
 Fair stripling ?—On thy cheek and sunny brow
 Scarce fifteen summers of their laughing course
 Have left light traces. If thy shaft hath pierced
 The ibex of the mountains, if thy step
 Hath climb'd some eagle's nest, and thou hast made
 His nest thy spoil, 'tis much !—And fear'st thou not
 The leader of the mighty ?

Alph. I have been
Rear'd amongst fearless men, and midst the rocks
And the wild hills, whereon my fathers fought
And won their battles. There are glorious tales
Told of their deeds, and I have learn'd them all.
How should I fear thee, Moor?

Abd. So, thou hast seen
Fields, where the combat's roar hath died away
Into the whispering breeze, and where wild flowers
Bloom o'er forgotten graves!—But know'st thou aught
Of those, where sword from crossing sword strikes fire,
And leaders are borne down, and rushing steeds
Trample the life from out the mighty hearts
That ruled the storm so late?—Speak not of death,
Till thou hast look'd on such.

Alph. I was not born
A shepherd's son, to dwell with pipe and crook,
And peasant-men, amidst the lowly vales;
Instead of ringing clarions, and bright spears,
And crested knights!—I am of princely race,
And, if my father would have heard my suit,
I tell thee, infidel! that long ere now,
I should have seen how lances meet; and swords
Do the field's work.

Abd. Boy! know'st thou there are sights
A thousand times more fearful?—men may die
Full proudly, when the skies and mountains ring
To battle-horn and tecbir.*—But not all
So pass away in glory. There are those,
Midst the dead silence of pale multitudes,
Led forth in fetters—dost thou mark me, boy?—
To take their last look of th' all-gladdening sun,
And bow, perchance, the stately head of youth,
Unto the death of shame!—Hadst thou seen this—

Alph. (to Carlos). Sweet brother, God is with us—fear thou not!
We have had heroes for our sires—this man
Should not behold us tremble.

Abd. There are means
To tame the loftiest natures. Yet again,
I ask thee, wilt thou, from beneath the walls,
Sue to thy sire for life; or wouldst thou die,
With this, thy brother?

Alph. Moslem! on the hills,
Around my father's castle, I have heard
The mountain-peasants, as they dress'd the vines,

* *Tecbir*, the war-cry of the Moors and Arabs.

Or drove the goats, by rock and torrent, home,
Singing their ancient songs ; and these were all
Of the Cid Campeador ; and how his sword
Tizona³ clear'd its way through turban'd hosts,
And captured Afric's kings, and how he won
Valencia from the Moor.⁴—I will not shame
The blood we draw from him !

(A Moorish Soldier enters.)

Soldier. Valencia's lord
Sends messengers, my chief.
Abd. Conduct them hither.

[The Soldier goes out, and re-enters with ELMINA, disguised, and an Attendant.]

Carlos (springing forward to the Attendant). Oh ! take me
hence, Diego ; take me hence

With thee, that I may see my mother's face
At morning, when I wake. Here dark-brow'd men
Frown strangely, with their cruel eyes, upon us.
Take me with thee, for thou art good and kind,
And well I know thou lov'st me, my Diego !

Abd. Peace, boy !—What tidings, Christian, from thy lord ?
Is he grown humbler, doth he set the lives
Of these fair nurslings at a city's worth ?

Alph. (rushing forward impatiently). Say not, he doth !—
Yet wherefore art thou here ?

If it be so—I could weep burning tears
For very shame !—If this *can* be, return !
Tell him, of all his wealth, his battle-spoils,
I will but ask a war-horse and a sword,
And that beside him in the mountain-chase,
And in his halls and at his stately feasts,
My place shall be no more !—but no !—I wrong,
I wrong my father !—Moor ! believe it not !
He is a champion of the cross and Spain,
Sprung from the Cid ;—and I too, I can die
As a warrior's high-born child !

Elm. Alas ! alas !

And wouldst thou die, thus early die, fair boy ?
What hath life done to thee, that thou shouldst cast
Its flower away, in very scorn of heart,
Ere yet the blight be come ?

Alph. That voice doth sound——

Abd. Stranger, who art thou ?—this is mockery ! speak !

Elm. (throwing off a mantle and helmet, and embracing her sons). My boys ! whom I have rear'd through many hours

Of silent joys and sorrows, and deep thoughts
Untold and unimagined ; let me die
With you, now I have held you to my heart,
And seen once more the faces, in whose light
My soul hath lived for years !

Carlos. Sweet mother ! now
Thou shalt not leave us more.

Abd. Enough of this !
Woman ! what seek'st thou here ?—How hast thou dared
To front the mighty thus amidst his hosts ?

Elm. Think'st thou there dwells no courage but in breasts
That set their mail against the ringing spears,
When helmets are struck down ?—Thou little know'st
Of nature's marvels !—Chief ! my heart is nerved
To make its way through things which warrior-men,—
Aye, they that master death by field or flood,
Would look on, ere they braved !—I have no thought,
No sense of fear !—Thou'rt mighty ! but a soul
Wound up like mine is mightier, in the power
Of that one feeling, pour'd through all its depths,
Than monarchs with their hosts !—Am I not come
To die with these, my children ?

Abd. Doth thy faith
Bid thee do this, fond Christian ?—Hast thou not
The means to save them ?

Elm. I have prayers, and tears,
And agonies !—and He—my God—the God
Whose hand, or soon or late, doth find its hour
To bow the crested head—hath made these things
Most powerful in a world where all must learn
That one deep language, by the storm call'd forth
From the bruised reeds of earth !—For thee, perchance,
Affliction's chastening lesson hath not yet
Been laid upon thy heart, and thou may'st love
To see the creatures, by its might brought low,
Humbled before thee.

[She throws herself at his feet.

Conqueror ! I can kneel !

I, that drew birth from princes, bow myself
E'en to thy feet ! Call in thy chiefs, thy slaves,
If this will swell thy triumph, to behold
The blood of kings, of heroes, thus abased !
Do this, but spare my sons !

Alph. (attempting to raise her). Thou shouldst not kneel
Unto this infidel !—Rise, rise, my mother !
This sight doth shame our house !

Abd. Thou daring boy !
They that in arms have taught thy father's land

How chains are worn, shall school that haughty mien
Unto another language.

Elm. Peace, my son !

Have pity on my heart !—Oh, pardon, Chief !
He is of noble blood !—Hear, hear me yet !
Are there no lives through which the shafts of Heaven
May reach your soul ?—He that loves aught on earth,
Dares far too much, if he be merciless !
Is it for those, whose frail mortality
Must one day strive alone with God and death,
To shut their souls against th' appealing voice
Of nature, in her anguish ?—Warrior ! Man !
To you too, aye, and haply with your hosts,
By thousands and ten thousands marshall'd round,
And your strong armour on, shall come that stroke
Which the lance wards not !—Where shall your high heart
Find refuge then, if in the day of might
Woe hath lain prostrate, bleeding at your feet,
And you have pitied not ?

Abd. These are vain words.

Elm. Have you no children ?—fear you not to bring
The lightning on their heads ?—In your own land
Doth no fond mother, from the tents, beneath
Your native palms, look o'er the deserts out,
To greet your homeward step ?—You have not yet
Forgot so utterly her patient love—
For is not woman's, in all climes, the same ?—
That you should scorn *my* prayer !—Oh, Heaven ! his eye
Doth wear no mercy !

Abd. Then it mocks you not.

I have swept o'er the mountains of your land,
Leaving my traces, as the visitings
Of storms, upon them !—Shall I now be stay'd !
Know, unto me it were as light a thing,
In this, my course, to quench your children's lives,
As, journeying through a forest, to break off
The young wild branches that obstruct the way
With their green sprays and leaves.

Elm. Are there such hearts
Amongst Thy works, oh God ?

Abd. Kneel not to me.

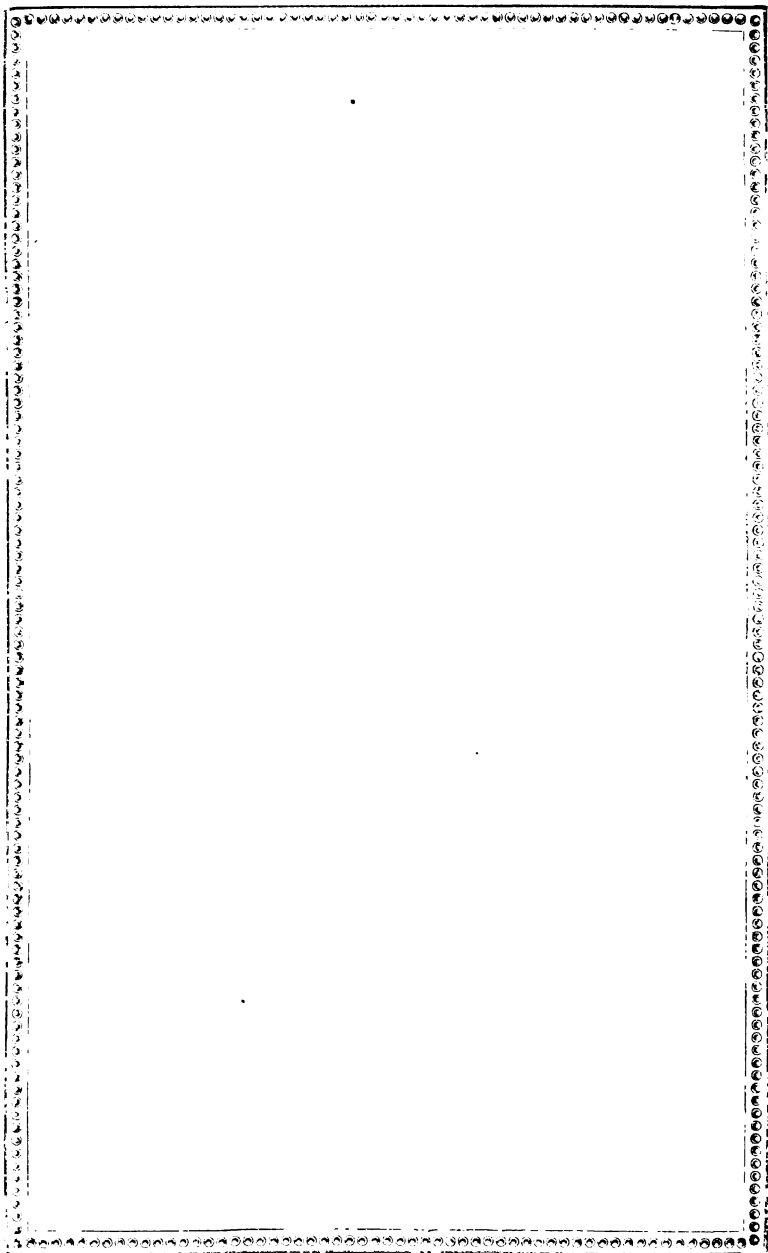
Kneel to your lord ! on his resolves doth hang
His children's doom. He may be lightly won
By a few bursts of passionate tears and words.

Elm. (*rising indignantly*). Speak not of noble men !—he
bears a soul
Stronger than love or death.



Gonzales.—"Alas ! the cause
Lies deeper in their misery !"

[*p.* 86.]



Alph. (with exultation). I knew 'twas thus !
He could not fail !

Elm. There is no mercy, none,
On this cold earth !—To strive with such a world,
Hearts should be void of love !—We will go hence,
My children ! we are summon'd. Lay your heads,
In their young radiant beauty, once again
To rest upon this bosom. He that dwells
Beyond the clouds which press us darkly round,
Will yet have pity, and before His face
We three will stand together ! Moslem ! now
Let the stroke fall at once !

Abd. 'Tis thine own will.
These might e'en yet be spared.

Elm. Thou wilt not spare !
And he beneath whose eye their childhood grew,
And in whose paths they sported, and whose ear
From their first lisping accents caught the sound
Of that word—*Father*—once a name of love—
Is—Men shall call him *stedfast*.

Abd. Hath the blast
Of sudden trumpets ne'er at dead of night,
When the land's watchers fear'd no hostile step,
Startled the slumberers from their dreamy world,
In cities, whose heroic lords have been
Stedfast as thine.

Elm. There's meaning in thine eye,
More than thy words.

Abd. (pointing to the city). Look to yon towers and walls
Think you no hearts within their limits pine,
Wearied of hopeless warfare, and prepared
To burst the feeble links which bind them still
Unto endurance ?

Elm. Thou hast said too well.
But what of this ?

Abd. Then there are those, to whom
The Prophet's armies not as foes would pass
Yon gates, but as deliverers. Might they not
In some still hour, when weariness takes rest,
Be won to welcome us ?—Your children's steps
May yet bound lightly through their father's halls !

Alph. (indignantly). Thou treacherous Moor
Elm. Let me not thus be tried
Beyond all strength, oh Heaven !

Abd. Now, 'tis for thee,
Thou Christian mother ! on thy sons to pass

The sentence—life or death !—the price is set
On their young blood, and rests within thy hands.

Alph. Mother ! thou tremblest !

Abd. Hath thy heart resolved ?

Elm. (*covering her face with her hands*). My boy's proud eye
is on me, and the things

Which rush, in stormy darkness, through my soul,
Shrink from his glance. I cannot answer *here*.

Abd. Come forth. ' We'll commune elsewhere.

Carlos (*to his mother*). Wilt thou go ?

Oh ! let me follow thee !

Elm. Mine own fair child !—

Now that thine eyes have pour'd once more on mine
The light of their young smile, and thy sweet voice
Hath sent its gentle music through my soul,
And I have felt the twining of thine arms—
How shall I leave thee ?

Abd. Leave him, as 'twere but
For a brief slumber, to behold his face
At morning, with the sun's.

Alph. Thou hast no look
For me, my mother !

Elm. Oh ! that I should live
To say, I *dare* not look on thee !—Farewell,
My first born, fare thee well !

Alph. Yet, yet beware !
It were a grief more heavy on thy soul,
That I should blush for thee, than o'er my grave
That thou shouldst proudly weep !

Abd. Away ! we trifle here. The night wanes fast.
Come forth !

Elm. One more embrace ! My sons, farewell !

[*Exeunt ABDULLAH with ELMINA and her
Attendant.*]

Alph. Hear me yet once, my mother !

But one word more ! Art thou gone ?
[*He rushes out, followed by CARLOS.*]

SCENE—*The Garden of a Palace in Valencia.*

XIMENA, THERESA.

Ther. Stay yet awhile. A purer air doth rove
Here through the myrtles whispering, and the limes,

And shaking sweetness from the orange boughs,
Than waits you in the city.

Xim. There are those
In their last need, and on their bed of death,
At which no hand doth minister but mine
That wait me in the city. Let us hence.

Ther. You have been wont to love the music made
By founts, and rustling foliage, and soft winds.
Breathing of citron-groves. And will you turn
From these to scenes of death?

Xim. To me the voice
Of summer, whispering through young flowers and leaves,
Now speaks too deep a language! and of all
Its dreamy and mysterious melodies,
The breathing soul is sadness!—I have felt
That summons through my spirit, after which
The hues of earth are changed, and all her sounds
Seem fraught with secret warnings.—There is cause
That I should bend my footsteps to the scenes
Where Death is busy, taming warrior-hearts,
And pouring winter through the fiery blood,
And fettering the strong arm!—For now no sigh
In the dull air, nor floating cloud in heaven,—
No, not the lightest murmur of a leaf,
But of his angel's silent coming bears
Some token to my soul.—But nought of this
Unto my mother!—These are awful hours!
And on their heavy steps, afflictions crowd
With such dark pressure, there is left no room
For one grief more.

Ther. Sweet lady, talk not thus!
Your eye this morn doth wear a calmer light,
There's more of life in its clear tremulous ray
Than I have mark'd of late. Nay, go not yet;
Rest by this fountain, where the laurels dip
Their glossy leaves. A fresher gale doth spring
From the transparent waters, dashing round
Their silvery spray, with a sweet voice of coolness,
O'er the pale glistening marble. 'Twill call up
Faint bloom, if but a moment's, to your cheek.
Rest here, ere you go forth, and I will sing
The melody you love.

THERESA sings.

Why is the Spanish maiden's grave
So far from her own bright land?

The sunny flowers that o'er it wave
Were sown by no kindred hand.

'Tis not the orange-bough that sends
Its breath on the sultry air,
'Tis not the myrtle-stem that bends
To the breeze of evening there !

But the Rose of Sharon's eastern bloom
By the silent dwelling fades,
And none but strangers pass the tomb
Which the Palm of Judah shades.

The lowly Cross, with flowers o'ergrown,
Marks well that place of rest ;
But who hath graved, on its mossy stone,
A sword, a helm, a crest ?

These are the trophies of a chief,
A lord of the axe and spear !—
Some blossom pluck'd, some faded leaf,
Should grace a maiden's bier !

Scorn not her tomb—deny not her
The honours of the brave !
O'er that forsaken sepulchre,
Banner and plume might wave.

She bound the steel, in battle tried,
Her fearless heart above,
And stood with brave men, side by side,
In the strength and faith of love !

That strength prevail'd—that faith was bless'd !
True was the javelin thrown ;
Yet pierced it not her warrior's breast,—
She met it with her own !

And nobly won, where heroes fell
In arms for the holy shrine,
A death which saved what she loved so well,
And a grave in Palestine.

Then let the Rose of Sharon spread
Its breast to the glowing air,
And the Palm of Judah lift its head,
Green and immortal there !

And let yon grey stone, undefaced,
With its trophy mark the scene,
Telling the pilgrim of the waste,
Where Love and Death have been.

Xim. Those notes were wont to make my heart beat quick,
As at a voice of victory ; but to-day
The spirit of the song is changed, and seems
All mournful. Oh ! that ere my early grave
Shuts out the sunbeam, I might hear one peal
Of the Castilian trumpet, ringing forth
Beneath my father's banner !—In that sound
Were life to you, sweet brothers !—But for me—
Come on—our tasks await us. They who know
Their hours are number'd out, have little time
To give the vague and slumberous languor way,
Which doth steal o'er them in the breath of flowers,
And whisper of soft winds.

ELMINA enters hurriedly.

Elm. This air will calm my spirit, ere yet I meet
His eye, which must be met.—Thou here, Ximena !

[She starts back on seeing XIMENA.

Xim. Alas ! my mother ! In that hurrying step
And troubled glance I read—

Elm. (wildly). Thou read'st it not !
Why, who would live, if unto mortal eye
The things lay glaring, which within our hearts
We treasure up for God's ?—Thou read'st it not !
I say, thou canst not !—There's not one on earth
Shall know the thoughts, which for themselves have made
And kept dark places in the very breast
Whereon he hath laid his slumber, till the hour
When the graves open !

Xim. Mother ! what is this ?
Alas ! your eye is wandering, and your cheek
Flush'd, as with fever ! To your woes the night
Hath brought no rest.

Elm. Rest ?—who should rest ?—not he
That holds one earthly blessing to his heart
Nearer than life !—No ! if this world have aught
Of bright or precious, let not him who calls
Such things his own, take rest !—Dark spirits keep watch,
And they to whom fair honour, chivalrous fame,

Were as heaven's air, the vital element
 Wherein thy breathed, may wake, and find their souls
 Made marks for human scorn !—Will they bear on
 With life struck down, and thus disrobed of all
 Its glorious drapery?—Who shall tell us this?
 —Will *he* so bear it?

Jim. Mother ! let us kneel,
 And blend our hearts in prayer !—What else is left
 To mortals when the dark hour's might is on them?
 —Leave us, Theresa.—Grief like this doth find
 Its balm in solitude.

[*Exit* THERESA]

My mother ! peace
 Is heaven's benignant answer to the cry
 Of wounded spirits. Wilt thou kneel with me?

Elm. Away ! 'tis but for souls unstain'd to wear
 Heaven's tranquil image on their depths.—The stream
 Of my dark thoughts, all broken by the storm,
 Reflects but clouds and lightnings !—Didst thou speak
 Of peace?—'tis fled from earth !—but there is joy !
 Wild, troubled joy !—And who shall know, my child !
 It is not happiness?—Why, our own hearts
 Will keep the secret close !—Joy, joy ! if but
 To leave this desolate city, with its dull
 Slow knells and dirges, and to breathe again
 Th' untainted mountain-air !—But hush ! the trees,
 The flowers, the waters, must hear nought of this !
 They are full of voices, and will whisper things—
 We'll speak of it no more.

Jim. Oh ! pitying heaven !
 This grief doth shake her season !

Elm. (starting). Hark ! a step !
 'Tis—'tis thy father's !—come away—not now—
 He must not see us now !

Jim. Why should this be ?

GONZALEZ enters, and detains ELMINA.

Gon. Elmina, dost thou shun me?—Have we not,
 E'en from the hopeful and the sunny time
 When youth was as a glory round our brows,
 Held on through life together?—And is this,
 When eve is gathering round us, with the gloom
 Of stormy clouds, a time to part our steps
 Upon the darkening wild ?

Elm. (coldly). There needs not this.
 Why shouldst thou think I shunn'd thee ?

Gon. Should the love

That shone o'er many years, th' unfading love,
Whose only change hath been from gladdening smiles
To mingling sorrows and sustaining strength,
Thus lightly be forgotten ?

Elm. Speak'st thou thus ?—

I have knelt before thee with that very plea,
When it avail'd me not !—But there are things
Whose very breathings on the soul erase
All record of past love, save the chill sense,
Th' unquiet memory of its wasted faith,
And vain devotedness !—Aye ! they that fix
Affection's perfect trust on aught of earth,
Have many a dream to start from !

Gon. This is but

The wildness and the bitterness of grief,
Ere yet th' unsettled heart hath closed its long
Impatient conflicts with a mightier power,
Which makes all conflict vain.

—Hark ! was there not

A sound of distant trumpets, far beyond
The Moorish tents, and of another tone
Than th' Afric horn, Ximena ?

Xim. Oh, my father !

I know that horn too well.—'Tis but the wind,
Which, with a sudden rising, bears its deep
And savage war-note from us, wafting it
O'er the far hills.

Gon. Alas ! this woe must be !

I do but shake my spirit from its height
So startling it with hope !—But the dread hour
Shall be met bravely still. I can keep down
Yet for a little while—and Heaven will ask
No more—the passionate workings of my heart ;—
And thine—Elmina ?

Elm. 'Tis—I am prepared.

I have prepared for all.

Gon. Oh, well I knew

Thou wouldst not fail me !—Not in vain my soul,
Upon thy faith and courage, hath built up
Unshaken trust.

Elm. (wildly). Away!—thou know'st me not !

Man dares too far, his rashness would invest
This our mortality with an attribute
Too high and awful, boasting that he knows
One human heart !

Gon. These are wild words, but yet

I will not doubt thee !—Hast thou not been found

Noble in all things, pouring thy soul's light
 Undimm'd o'er every trial?—And, as our fates,
 So must our names be, undivided!—Thine,
 I' th' record of a warrior's life, shall find
 Its place of stainless honour.—By his side——

Elm. May this be borne?—How much of agony
 Hath the heart room for?—Speak to me in wrath—
 I can endure it!—But no gentle words!
 No words of love! no praise!—Thy sword might slay,
 And be more merciful!

Gon. Wherefore art thou thus?
 Elmina, my beloved!

Elm. No more of love!—
 Have I not said there's that within my heart,
 Whereon it falls as living fire would fall
 Upon an unclosed wound?

Gon. Nay, lift thine eyes,
 That I may read *their* meaning!

Elm. Never more
 With a free soul—What have I said?—'twas nought!
 Take thou no heed! The words of wretchedness
 Admit not scrutiny. Wouldst thou mark the speech
 Of troubled dreams?

Gon. I have seen thee in the hour
 Of thy deep spirit's joy, and when the breath
 Of grief hung chilling round thee; in all change,
 Bright health and drooping sickness; hope and fear;
 Youth and decline; but never yet, Elmina,
 Ne'er hath thine eye till now shrunk back perturb'd
 With shame or dread, from mine!

Elm. Thy glance doth search
 A wounded heart too deeply.

Gon. Hast thou there
 Aught to conceal?

Elm. Who hath not?

Gon. Till this hour
 Thou never hadst!—Yet hear me!—by the free
 And unattainted fame which wraps the dust
 Of thine heroic fathers——

Elm. This to me!—
 Bring your inspiring war-notes, and your sounds
 Of festal music round a dying man!
 Will his heart echo them?—But if thy words
 Were spells, to call up, with each lofty tone,
 The grave's most awful spirits, they would stand
 Powerless, before my anguish!

Gon. Then, by her,

Who there looks on thee in the purity
Of her devoted youth, and o'er whose name
No blight must fall, and whose pale cheek must ne'er
Burn with that deeper tinge, caught painfully
From the quick feeling of dishonour.—Speak!
Unfold this mystery!—By thy sons——

Elm. My sons!
And canst *thou* name them?

Gon. Proudly!—Better far
They died with all the promise of their youth,
And the fair honour of their house upon them,
Than that with manhood's high and passionate soul
To fearful strength unfolded, they should live,
Barr'd from the lists of crested chivalry,
And pining, in the silence of a woe,
Which from the heart shuts daylight;—o'er the shame
Of those who gave them birth!—But *thou* couldst ne'er
Forget their lofty claims!

Elm. (*wildly*). 'Twas but for them!
'Twas for them only!—Who shall dare arraign
Madness of crime?—And He who made us, knows
There are dark moments of all hearts and lives,
Which bear down reason!

Gon. Thou, whom I have loved
With such high trust, as o'er our nature threw
A glory, scarce allow'd;—what hast thou done?——
Ximena, go thou hence!

Elm. No, no! my child!
There's pity in thy look!—All other eyes
Are full of wrath and scorn!—Oh! leave me not!

Gon. That I should live to see thee thus abased!—
Yet speak!—What hast thou done?

Elm. Look to the gate!
Thou'rt worn with toil—but take no rest to-night!
The western gate!—Its watchers have been won—
The Christian city hath been bought and sold!
They will admit the Moor!

Gon. They have been won!
Brave men and tried so long!—Whose work was this?

Elm. Think'st thou all hearts like thine?—Can mothers stand
To see their children perish?

Gon. Then the guilt
Was thine?

Elm. Shall mortal dare to call it guilt?
I tell thee, Heaven, which made all holy things,
Made nought more holy than the boundless love
Which fills a mother's heart!—I say, 'tis woe

Siege of Valencia.

Enough, with such an aching tenderness,
To love aught earthly !—and in vain ! in vain !—
We are press'd down too sorely !

Gon. (in a low desponding voice). Now my life
Is struck to worthless ashes !—In my soul
Suspicion hath ta'en root. The nobleness
Henceforth is blotted from all human brows,
And fearful power, a dark and troublous gift,
Almost like prophecy, is pour'd upon me,
To read the guilty secrets in each eye
That once look'd bright with truth !—

Why then I have gain'd

What men call wisdom !—A new sense, to which
All tales that speak of high fidelity,
And holy courage, and proud honour, tried,
Search'd, and found steadfast, even to martyrdom,
Are food for mockery !—Why should I not cast
From my thinn'd locks the wearing helm at once,
And in the heavy sickness of my soul
Throw the sword down for ever ?—Is there aught
In all this world of gilded hollowness,
Now the bright hues drop off its loveliest things,
Worth striving for again ?

Xim. Father ! look up !
Turn unto me, thy child !

Gon. Thy face is fair ;
And hath been unto me, in other days,
As morning to the journeyer of the deep ;
But now—'tis too like hers !

Elm. (falling at his feet). Woe, shame and woe,
Are on me in their might !—forgive, forgive !

Gon. (starting up). Doth the Moor deem that I have part or
share,

Or counsel in this vileness ?—Stay me not !
Let go thy hold—'tis powerless on me now—
I linger here, while treason is at work !

[Exit GONZALEZ.]

Elm. Ximena, dost thou scorn me ?

Xim. I have found
In mine own heart too much of feebleness,
Hid, beneath many foldings, from all eyes
But *His* whom nought can blind ;—to dare do aught
But pity thee, dear mother !

Elm. Blessings light
On thy fair head, my gentle child, for this !
Thou kind and merciful !—My soul is faint—
Worn with long strife !—Is there aught else to do,

Or suffer, ere we die?—Oh God! my sons!—
I have betray'd them!—All their innocent blood
Is on my soul!

Xim. How shall I comfort thee?—
Oh! hark! what sounds come deepening on the wind,
So full of solemn hope!

*(A procession of Nuns passes across the Scene, bearing relics,
and chanting.)*

CHANT.

A sword is on the land!
He that bears down young tree and glorious flower,
Death is gone forth, he walks the wind in power!
—Where is the warrior's hand?
Our steps are in the shadows of the grave,
Hear us, we perish! Father, hear, and save!

If, in the days of song,
The days of gladness, we have call'd on Thee,
When mirthful voices rang from sea to sea,
And joyous hearts were strong;
Now, that alike the feeble and the brave
Must cry, "We perish!"—Father! hear, and save!

The days of song are fled!
The winds come loaded, wafting dirge-notes by,
But they that linger soon unmourn'd must die;
—The dead weep not the dead!
Wilt thou forsake us midst the stormy wave?—
We sink, we perish!—Father, hear, and save!

Helmet and lance are dust!
Is not the strong men wither'd from our eye?
The arm struck down that held our banners high?
—Thine is our spirit's trust!
Look through the gathering shadows of the grave!
Do we not perish?—Father, hear, and save!

HERNANDEZ enters.

Elm. Why comest thou, man of vengeance?—What have I
To do with thee?—Am I not bow'd enough?
Thou art no mourner's comforter!

Her. Thy lord
Hath sent me unto thee. Till this day's task

Siege of Valencia.

Be closed, thou daughter of the feeble heart !
 He bids thee seek him not, but lay thy woes
 Before Heaven's altar, and in penitence
 Make thy soul's peace with God.

Elm. Till this day's task

Be closed !—there is strange triumph in thine eyes—
 Is it that I have fallen from that high place
 Whereon I stood in fame?—But I can feel
 A wild and bitter pride in thus being past
 The power of thy dark glance !—My spirit now
 Is wound about by one sole mighty grief ;
 Thy scorn hath lost its sting.—Thou mayst reproach—
Her. I come not to reproach thee. Heaven doth work

By many agencies ; and in its hour
 There is no insect which the summer breeze
 From the green leaf shakes trembling, but may serve
 Its deep unsearchable purposes, as well
 As the great ocean, or th' eternal fires,
 Pent in earth's caves !—Thou hast but speeded that,
 Which, in th' infatuate blindness of thy heart,
 Thou wouldst have trampled o'er all holy ties,
 But to avert one day !

Elm. My senses fail—

Thou saidst—speak yet again !—I could not catch
 The meaning of thy words.

Her. E'en now thy lord

Hath sent our foes defiance. On the walls
 He stands in conference with the boastful Moor,
 And awful strength is with him. Through the blood
 Which this day must be pour'd in sacrifice
 Shall Spain be free. On all her olive-hills
 Shall men set up the battle-sign of fire,
 And round its blaze, at midnight, keep the sense
 Of vengeance wakeful in each other's hearts
 E'en with thy children's tale !

Xim. Peace, father ! peace !

Behold she sinks !—the storm hath done its work
 Upon the broken reed. Oh ! lend thine aid
 To bear her hence.

[*They lead her away.*]

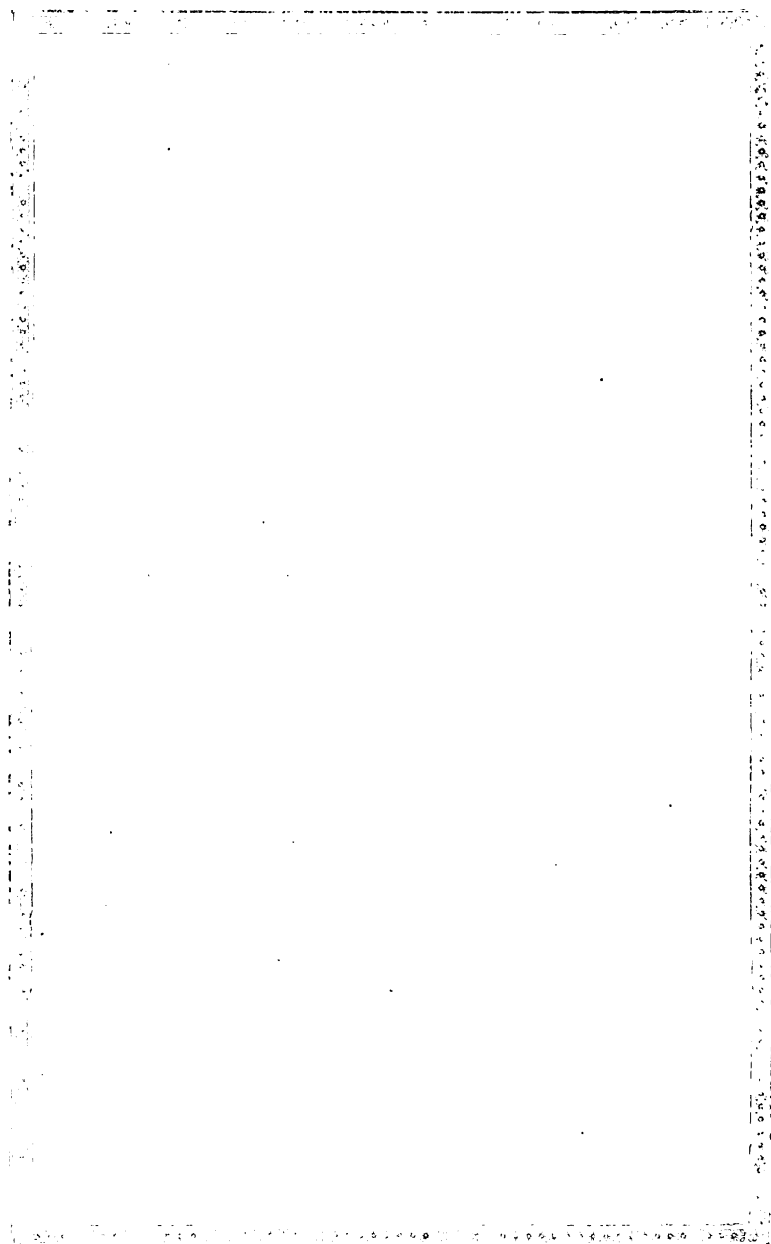
SCENE—*A Street in Valencia. Several Groups of Citizens and Soldiers, many of them lying on the Steps of a Church. Arms scattered on the Ground around them.*

An old Citizen. The air is sultry, as with thunder-clouds.
 I left my desolate home, that I might breathe



Elmina.—" . . . Am I not come
To die with these, my children?"

[p. 89.]



More freely in heaven's face, but my heart feels
With this hot gloom o'erburthen'd. I have now
No sons to tend me. Which of you, kind friends,
Will bring the old man water from the fount,
To moisten his parch'd lip? [*A citizen goes out.*]

Second Cit. This wasting siege,
Good Father Lopez, hath gone hard with you !
'Tis sad to hear no voices through the house,
Once peopled with fair sons !

Third Cit. Why, better thus,
Than to be haunted with their famish'd cries,
E'en in your very dreams !

Old Cit. Heaven's will be done !
These are dark times ! I have not been alone
In my affliction.

Third Cit. (with bitterness). Why, we have but this thought
Left for our gloomy comfort !—And 'tis well !
Aye, let the balance be awhile struck even
Between the noble's palace and the hut,
Where the worn peasant sickens !—They that bear
The humble dead unhonour'd to their homes,
Pass now i' th' streets no lordly bridal train,
With its exulting music ; and the wretch
Who on the marble steps of some proud hall
Flings himself down to die, in his last need
And agony of famine, doth behold
No scornful guests, with their long purple robes,
To the banquet sweeping by. Why, this is just !
These are the days when pomp is made to feel
Its human mould !

Fourth Cit. Heard you last night the sound
Of Saint Jago's bell ?—How sullenly
From the great tower it peal'd !

Fifth Cit. Aye, and 'tis said
No mortal hand was near when so it seem'd
To shake the midnight streets.

Old Cit. Too well I know
The sound of coming fate !—'Tis ever thus
When Death is on his way to make it night
In the Cid's ancient house.—Oh ! there are things
In this strange world of which we have all to learn
When its dark bounds are pass'd.—Yon bell, untouch'd
(Save by the hands we see not), still doth speak—
When of that line some state'y head is mark'd,—
With a wild hollow peal, at dead of night,
Rocking Valencia's towers, I have heard it oft,
Nor known its warning false.

Fourth Cit. And will our chief
Buy with the price of his fair children's blood
A few more days of pining wretchedness
For this forsaken city?

Old Cit. Doubt it not!—
But with that ransom he may purchase still
Deliverance for the land!—And yet 'tis sad
To think that such a race, with all its fame,
Should pass away!—For she, his daughter too,
Moves upon earth as some bright thing whose time
To sojourn there is short.

Fifth Cit. Then woe for us
When she is gone!—Her voice—the very sound
Of her soft step was comfort, as she moved
Through the still house of mourning!—Who like her
Shall give us hope again?

Old Cit. Be still!—she comes,
And with a mien how changed!—A hurrying step,
And a flush'd cheek!—What may this bode?—Be still!

XIMENA enters, with Attendants carrying a banner

Xim. Men of Valencia! in an hour like this,
What do ye here?

A Cit. We die!

Xim. Brave men die now
Girt for the toil, as travellers suddenly
By the dark night o'ertaken on their way!
These days require such death!—It is too much
Of luxury for our wild and angry times,
To fold the mantle round us, and to sink
From life, as flowers that shut up silently,
When the sun's heat doth scorch them!—Hear ye not?

A Cit. Lady! what wouldst thou with us?

Xim. Rise and arm!
E'en now the children of your chief are led
Forth by the Moor to perish!—Shall this be,
Shall the high sound of such a name be hush'd,
I' th' land to which for ages it hath been
A battle-word, as 'twere some passing note
Of shepherd-music?—Must this work be done,
And ye lie pining here, as men in whom
The pulse which God hath made for noble thought
Can be so thrill'd no longer?

Cit. 'Tis even so!
Sickness, and toil, and grief, have breathed upon us,
Our hearts beat faint and low.

Xim. Are ye so poor
Of soul, my countrymen ! that ye can draw
Strength from no deeper source than that which sends
The red blood mantling through the joyous veins,
And gives the fleet step wings ?—Why, how have age
And sensitive womanhood ere now endured,
Through pangs of searching fire, in some proud cause,
Blessing that agony ?—Think ye the Power
Which bore them nobly up, as if to teach
The torturer where eternal Heaven had set
Bounds to his sway, was earthy, of this earth,
This dull mortality ?—Nay, then look on me !
Death's touch hath mark'd me, and I stand amongst you,
As one whose place, i' th' sunshine of your world,
Shall soon be left to fill !—I say, the breath
Of th' incense, floating through yon fane, shall scarce
Pass from your path before me ! But even now
I have that within me, kindling through the dust,
Which from all time hath made high deeds its voice
And token to the nations ;—Look on me !
Why hath Heaven pour'd forth courage, as a flame
Wasting the womanish heart, which must be still'd
Yet sooner for its swift consuming brightness,
If not to shame your doubt, and your despair,
And your soul's torpor ?—Yet, arise and arm !
It may not be too late.

A Cit. Why, what are we,
To cope with hosts ?—Thus faint, and worn, and few,
O'ernumber'd and forsaken, is 't for us
To stand against the mighty ?

Xim. And for whom
Hath He, who shakes the mighty with a breath
From their high places, made the fearfulness,
And ever-wakeful presence of his power,
To the pale startled earth most manifest,
But for the weak ?—Was 't for the helm'd and crown'd
That suns were stay'd at noonday ?—Stormy seas
As a rill parted ?—Mail'd archangels sent
To wither up the strength of kings with death ?—
I tell you, if these marvels have been done,
'Twas for the wearied and th' oppress'd of men,
They needed such !—And generous faith hath power
By her prevailing spirit, e'en yet to work
Deliverances, whose tale shall live with those
Of the great elder time !—Be of good heart !
Who is forsaken ?—He that gives the thought

Siege of Valencia.

A place within his breast !—'Tis not for you.—
Know ye this banner ?

Citizens (murmuring to each other). Is she not inspired ?
Doth not Heaven call us by her fervent voice ?

Xim. Know ye this banner ?

Cits. 'Tis the Cid's.

Xim. The Cid's !

Who breathes that name but in th' exulting tone
Which the heart rings to ?—Why, the very wind
As it swells out the noble standard's fold
Hath a triumphant sound !—The Cid's !—it moved
Even as a sign of victory through the land,
From the free skies ne'er stooping to a foe !

Old Cit. Can ye still pause, my brethren ?—Oh ! that youth
Through this worn frame were kindling once again !

Xim. Ye linger still ?—Upon this very air,
He that was born in happy hour for Spain⁶
Pour'd forth his conquering spirit !—'Twas the breeze
From your own mountains which came down to wave
This banner of his battles, as it droop'd
Above the champion's death-bed. Nor even then
Its tale of glory closed.—They made no moan
O'er the dead hero, and no dirge was sung,⁷
But the deep tambour and shrill horn of war
Told when the mighty pass'd !—They wrapt him not
With the pale shroud, but braced the warrior's form
In war-array, and on his barbed steed,
As for a triumph, rear'd him ; marching forth
In the hush'd midnight from Valencia's walls,
Beleaguer'd then, as now. All silently
The stately funeral moved :—but who was he
That follow'd, charging on the tall white horse,
And with the solemn standard, broad and pale,
Waving in sheets of snow-light ?—And the cross,
The bloody cross, far-blazing from his shield,
And the fierce meteor-sword ?—They fled, they fled !
The kings of Afric, with their countless hosts,
Were dust in his red path !—The scimeter
Was shiver'd as a reed !—for in that hour
The warrior-saint that keeps the watch for Spain,
Was arm'd betimes !—And o'er that fiery field
The Cid's high banner stream'd all joyously,
For still its lord was there !

Cits. (rising tumultuously). Even unto death
Again it shall be follow'd !

Xim. Will he see

The noble stem hewn down, the beacon-light

Which his house for ages o'er the land
Hath shone through cloud and storm, thus quench'd at once ?
Will he not aid his children in the hour
Of this their uttermost peril ?—Awful power
Is with the holy dead, and there are times
When the tomb hath no chain they cannot burst ?—
Is it a thing forgotten, how he woke
From its deep rest of old, remembering Spain
In her great danger ?—At the night's mid-watch
How Leon started, when the sound was heard
That shook her dark and hollow-echoing streets,
As with the heavy tramp of steel-clad men,
By thousands marching through !—For he had risen !
The Campeador was on his march again,
And in his arms, and follow'd by his hosts
Of shadowy spearmen !—He had left the world
From which we are dimly parted, and gone forth,
And call'd his buried warriors from their sleep,
Gathering them round him to deliver Spain ;
For Afric was upon her !—Morning broke—
Day rush'd through clouds of battle ;—but at eve
Our God had triumph'd, and the rescued land
Sent up a shout of victory from the field,
That rock'd her ancient mountains.

The Cits. Arm ! to arms !

On to our chief !—We have strength within us yet
To die with our blood roused !—Now, be the word,
For the Cid's house !

[*They begin to arm themselves*]

Xim. Ye know his battle-song ?
The old rude strain wherewith his hands went forth
To strike down Paynim swords !

(*She Sings.*)

THE CID'S BATTLE SONG.

The Moor is on his way !
With the tambour-peal and the tecbir-shout,
And the horn o'er the blue seas ringing out,
He hath marshall'd his dark array !

Shout through the vine-clad land !
That her sons on all their hills may hear,
And sharpen the point of the red wolf-spear,
And the sword for the brave man's hand !

Siege of Valencia.

(The CITIZENS join in the song, while they continue arming themselves.)

Banners are in the field
The chief must rise from his joyous board,
And turn from the feast ere the wine be pour'd,
And take up his father's shield !

The Moor is on his way !
Let the peasant leave his olive-ground,
And the goats roam wild through the pine-woods round !—
There is nobler work to-day !

Send forth the trumpet's call !
Till the bridegroom cast the goblet down,
And the marriage-robe and the flowery crown,
And arm in the banquet-hall !

And stay the funeral-train !
Bid the chanted mass be hush'd awhile,
And the bier laid down in the holy aisle,
And the mourners girt for Spain !

(They take up the banner, and follow XIMENA out. Their voices are heard gradually dying away at a distance.)

Ere night, must swords be red !
It is not an hour for knells and tears,
But for helmets braced, and serried spears !
To-morrow for the dead !

The Cid is in array !
His steed is barb'd, his plume waves high,
His banner is up in the sunny sky,
Now, joy for the Cross to-day !

SCENE—*The walls of the City. The Plain beneath, with the Moorish Camp and Army.*

GONZALEZ, GARCIAS, HERNANDEZ.

(A wild sound of Moorish music heard from below.)

Her. What notes are these in their deep mournfulness
So strangely wild ?

Gar. 'Tis the shrill melody
Of the Moor's ancient death-song. Well I know
The rude barbaric sound, but, till this hour,
It seem'd not fearful.—Now, a shuddering chill
Comes o'er me with its tones.—Lo ! from yon tent
They lead the noble boys !

Her. The young, and pure,
And beautiful victims !—'Tis on things like these
We cast our hearts in wild idolatry,
Sowing the winds with hope !—Yet this is well.
Thus brightly crown'd with life's most gorgeous flowers,
And all unblemish'd, earth should offer up
Her treasures unto Heaven !

Gar. (to Gonzalez). My chief, the Moor
Hath led your child forth.

Gon. (starting). Are my sons there ?
I knew they could not perish ; for yon Heaven
Would ne'er behold it !—Where is he that said
I was no more a father ?—They look changed—
Pallid and worn, as from a prison-house !
Or is't mine eye sees dimly ?—But their steps
Seem heavy as with pain.—I hear the clank—
Oh God ! their limbs are fetter'd !

Abd. (coming forward beneath the walls).

Christian ! look

Once more upon thy children. There is yet
One moment for the trembling of the sword ;
Their doom is still with thee.

Gon. Why should this man
So mock us with the semblance of our kind ?—
Moor ! Moor ! thou dost too daringly provoke,
In thy bold cruelty, th' all-judging One,
Who visits for such things !—Hast thou no sense
Of thy frail nature ?—'Twill be taught thee yet,
And darkly shall the anguish of my soul,
Darkly and heavily, pour itself on thine,
When thou shalt cry for mercy from the dust,
And be denied !

Abd. Nay, is it not thyself
That hast no mercy and no love within thee ?
These are thy sons, the nurslings of thy house ;
Speak ! must they live or die ?

(Gon. in violent emotion). Is it Heaven's will
To try the dust it kindles for a day,
With infinite agony !—How have I drawn
This chastening on my head !—They bloom'd around me,
And my heart grew too fearless in its joy,

Siege of Valencia.

Glorying in their bright promise !—If we fall,
Is there no pardon for our feebleness ?

(*Her. without speaking, holds up a Cross before him.*)

Abd. Speak !

Gon. (snatching the Cross, and lifting it up). Let the earth
be shaken through its depths,

But *this* must triumph !

Abd. (coldly). Be it as thou wilt.—

Unsheath the scimeter !

[*To his Guards.*]

Gar. (to Gonzalez). Away, my chief !

This is your place no longer. There are things
No human heart, though battle-proof as yours,
Unmadden'd may sustain.

Gon. Be still ! I have now
No place on earth but this !

Alph. (from beneath). Men ! give me way,
That I may speak forth once before I die !

Gar. The princely boy !—how gallantly his brow
Wears its high nature in the face of death !

Alph. Father !

Gon. My son ! my son !—Mine eldest-born !

Alph. Stay but upon the ramparts !—Fear thou not—
There is good courage in me : oh ! my father !
I will not shame thee !—only let me fall
Knowing thine eye looks proudly on thy child,
So shall my heart have strength.

Gon. Would, would to God,
That I might die for thee, my noble boy !
Alphonso, my fair son !

Alph. Could I have lived,
I might have been a warrior !—Now, farewell !
But look upon me still !—I will not blench
When the keen sabre flashes—Mark me well !
Mine eyelids shall not quiver as it falls,
So thou wilt look upon me !

Gar. (to Gonzalez). Nay, my lord !
We must begone !—Thou *canst* not bear it !

Gon. Peace !—

Who hath told *thee* how much man's heart can bear ?—
Lend me thine arm—my brain whirls fearfully—
How thick the shades close round !—my boy ! my boy !
Where art thou in this gloom ?

Gar. Let us go hence !

This is a dreadful moment !

Gon. Hush !—What saidst thou ?

Now let me look on him !—Dost *thou* see aught
Through the dull mist which wraps us ?

Gar. I behold—

Oh ! for a thousand Spaniards to rush down—

Gon. Thou seest—My heart stands still to hear thee speak !—
There seems a fearful hush upon the air,
As 'twere the dead of night !

Gar. The hosts have closed
Around the spot in stillness. Through the spears,
Ranged thick and motionless, I see him not ;—
But now—

Gon. He bade me keep mine eye upon him,
And all is darkness round me !—Now ?

Gar. A sword,
A sword, springs upward, like a lightning burst,
Through the dark serried mass !—Its cold blue glare
Is wavering to and fro—'tis vanish'd—hark !

Gon. I heard it, yes !—I heard the dull dead sound
That heavily broke the silence !—Didst thou speak ?—
I lost thy words—come nearer !

Gar. 'Twas—'tis past !—
The sword fell then !

Her. (*with exultation*). Flow forth, thou noble blood !
Fount of Spain's ransom and deliverance, flow
Uncheck'd and brightly forth !—Thou kingly stream !
Blood of our heroes ! blood of martyrdom !
Which through so many warrior-hearts hast pour'd
Thy fiery currents, and hast made our hills
Free, by thine own free offering !—Bathe the land,
But there thou shalt not sink !—Our very air
Shall take thy colouring, and our loaded skies
O'er th' infidel hang dark and ominous,
With battle-hues of thee !—and thy deep voice
Rising above them to the judgment-seat
Shall call a burst of gather'd vengeance down,
To sweep th' oppressor from us !—For thy wave
Hath made his guilt run o'er !

Gon. (*endeavouring to rouse himself*). 'Tis all a dream !
There is not one—no hand on earth could harm
That fair boy's graceful head !—Why look you thus ?

Abd. (*pointing to CARLOS*). Christian ! e'en yet thou hast a
son !

Gon. E'en yet !

Car. My father ! take me from these fearful men !
Wilt thou not save me, father ?

Gon. (*attempting to unsheath his sword*). Is the strength
From mine arm shiver'd ?—Garcias, follow me !

Gar. Whither, my chief?

Gon. Why, we can die as well

On yonder plain,—ay, a spear's thrust will do
The little that our misery doth require,
Sooner than e'en this anguish! Life is best
Thrown from us in such moments.

[Voices heard at a distance.

Her. Hush! what strain
Floats on the wind?

Gar. 'Tis the Cid's battle-song!
What marvel hath been wrought?

[Voices approaching heard in chorus.

The Moor is on his way!
With the tambour peal and the tecbir shout,
And the horn o'er the blue seas ringing out,
He hath marshall'd his dark array!

*XIMENA enters, followed by the CITIZENS, with the
Banner.*

Xim. Is it too late?—My father, these are men
Through life and death prepared to follow thee
Beneath this banner!—Is their zeal too late?—
Oh! there's a fearful history on thy brow!
What hast thou seen?

Gar. It is not *all* too late.

Xim. My brothers!

Her. All is well.

(To GARCÍAS.) Hush! wouldst thou chill
That which hath sprung within them, as a flame
From th' altar-embers mounts in sudden brightness?
I say, 'tis not too late, ye men of Spain!
On to the rescue!

Xim. Bless me, oh my father!
And I will hence, to aid thee with my prayers,
Sending my spirit with thee through the storm,
Lit up by flashing swords!

Gon. (falling upon her neck.) Hath aught been spared?
Am I not all bereft?—Thou'rt left me still!
Mine own, my loveliest one, thou'rt left me still!
Farewell!—thy father's blessing, and thy God's,
Be with thee, my Ximena!

Xim. Fare thee well!
If, ere thy steps turn homeward from the field,
The voice is hush'd that still hath welcomed thee,
Think of me in thy victory!

Her. Peace ! no more !
This is no time to melt our nature down
To a soft stream of tears !—Be of strong heart !
Give me the banner ! Swell the song again !

THE CITIZENS.

Ere night, must swords be red !
It is not an hour for knells and tears,
But for helmets braced and serried spears !—
To-morrow for the dead !

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

SCENE—*Before the Altar of a Church.*

ELMINA rises from the steps of the Altar.

Elm. The clouds are fearful that o'erhang thy ways,
Oh, thou mysterious Heaven !—It cannot be
That I have drawn the vials of thy wrath,
To burst upon me through the lifting up
Of a proud heart, elate in happiness !
No ! in my day's full noon, for me life's flowers
But wreath'd a cup of trembling ; and the love,
The boundless love, my spirit was form'd to bear,
Hath ever, in its place of silence, been
A trouble and a shadow, tinging thought
With hues too deep for joy !—I never look'd
On my fair children, in their buoyant mirth,
Or sunny sleep, when all the gentle air
Seem'd glowing with their quiet blessedness,
But o'er my soul there came a shuddering sense
Of earth, and its pale changes ; even like that
Which vaguely mingles with our glorious dreams,
A restless and disturbing consciousness
That the bright things must fade !—How have I shrunk
From the dull murmur of th' unquiet voice,
With its low tokens of mortality,
Till my heart fainted midst their smiles !—their smiles !—
Where are those glad looks now ?—Could they go down,
With all their joyous light, that seem'd not earth's,
To the cold grave ?—My children !—Righteous Heaven !
There floats a dark remembrance o'er my brain

Of one who told me, with relentless eye,
That *this* should be the hour !

XIMENA enters.

Xim. They are gone forth
Unto the rescue !—strong in heart and hope,
Faithful, though few !—My mother, let thy prayers
Call on the land's good saints to lift once more
The sword and cross that sweep the field for Spain,
As in old battle ; so thine arms e'en yet
May clasp thy sons !—For me, my part is done !
The flame, which dimly might have linger'd yet
A little while, hath gather'd all its rays
Brightly to sink at once ; and it is well !
The shadows are around me ; to thy heart
Fold me, that I may die.

Elm. My child !—What dream
Is on thy soul ?—Even now thine aspect wears
Life's brightest inspiration !

Xim. Death's !

Elm. Away !

Thine eye hath starry clearness, and thy cheek
Doth glow beneath it with a richer hue
Than tinged its earliest flower !

Xim. It well may be !
There are far deeper and far warmer hues
Than those which draw their colouring from the founts
Of youth, or health, or hope.

Elm. Nay, speak not thus !
There's that about thee shining which would send
E'en through *my* heart a sunny glow of joy,
Were't not for these sad words. The dim cold air
And solemn light, which wrap these tombs and shrines
As a pale gleaming shroud, seem kindled up
With a young spirit of ethereal hope
Caught from thy mien !—Oh no ! this is not death !

Xim. Why should not He, whose touch dissolves our chain,
Put on his robes of beauty when He comes
As a deliverer ?—He hath many forms,
They should not all be fearful !—If his call
Be but our gathering to that distant land
For whose sweet waters we have pined with thirst,
Why should not its prophetic sense be borne
Into the heart's deep stillness, with a breath
Of summer-winds, a voice of melody,
Solemn, yet lovely ?—Mother ! I depart !—

Be it thy comfort, in the after-days,
That thou hast seen me thus !

Elm. Distract me not
With such wild fears ! Can I bear on with life
When thou art gone ?—Thy voice, thy step, thy smile,
Pass'd from my path ?—Alas ! even now thine eye
Is changed—thy cheek is fading !

Xim. Ay, the clouds
Of the dim hour are gathering o'er my sight,
And yet I fear not, for the God of Help
Comes in that quiet darkness !—It may soothe
Thy woes, my mother ! if I tell thee now,
With what glad calmness I behold the veil
Falling between me and the world, wherein
My heart so ill hath rested.

Elm. Thine !

Xim. Rejoice
For her, that, when the garland of her life
Was blighted, and the springs of hope were dried,
Received her summons hence ; and had no time,
Bearing the canker at th' impatient heart,
To wither, sorrowing for that gift of Heaven,
Which lent one moment of existence light,
That dimm'd the rest for ever !

Elm. How is this ?

My child, what mean'st thou ?

Xim. Mother ! I have loved,
And been beloved !—the sunbeam of an hour,
Which gave life's hidden treasures to mine eye,
As they lay shining in their secret founts,
Went out, and left them colourless.—'Tis past—
And what remains on earth ?—the rainbow mist,
Through which I gazed, hath melted, and my sight
Is clear'd to look on all things as they are !—
But this is far too mournful ! Life's dark gift
Hath fallen too early and too cold upon me !—
Therefore I would go hence !

Elm. And thou hast loved
Unknown——

Xim. Oh ! pardon, pardon that I veil'd
My thoughts from thee !—But thou hadst woes enough,
And mine came o'er me when thy soul had need
Of more than mortal strength !—For I had scarce
Given the deep consciousness that I was loved
A treasure's place within my secret heart,
When earth's brief joy went from me !

'Twas at morn

Siege of Valencia.

I saw the warriors to their field go forth,
 And he—my chosen—was there amongst the rest,
 With his young glorious brow !—I look'd again—
 The strife grew dark beneath me—but his plume
 Waved free above the lances.—Yet again—
 It had gone down ! and steeds were trampling o'er
 The spot to which mine eyes were riveted,
 Till blinded by th' intenseness of their gaze !—
 And then—at last—I hurried to the gate,
 And met him there !—I met him !—on his shield,
 And with his cloven helm, and shiver'd sword,
 And dark hair steep'd in blood !—They bore him past—
 Mother !—I saw his face !—Oh ! such a death
 Works fearful changes on the fair of earth,
 The pride of woman's eye !

Elm. Sweet daughter, peace !

Wake not the dark remembrance ; for thy frame——

Xim.—There *will* be peace ere long. I shut my heart,
 Even as a tomb, o'er that lone silent grief,
 That I might spare it thee !—But now the hour
 Is come when that which would have pierced thy soul
 Shall be its healing balm. Oh ! weep thou not,
 Save with a gentle sorrow !

Elm. Must it be ?

Art thou indeed to leave me, ?

Xim. (exultingly). Be thou glad !

I say, rejoice above thy favour'd child !
 Joy, for the soldier when his field is fought,
 Joy, for the peasant when his vintage-task
 Is closed at eve !—But most of all for her,
 Who, when her life had changed its glittering robes
 For the dull garb of sorrow, which doth cling
 So heavily around the journeyers on,
 Cast down its weight—and slept !

Elm. Alas ! thine eye

Is wandering—yet how brightly !—Is this death,
 Or some high wondrous vision ?—Speak, my child !
 How is it with thee now ?

Xim. (wildly). I see it still !

'Tis floating, like a glorious cloud on high,
 My father's banner !—Hear'st thou not a sound ?
 The trumpet of Castile ?—Praise, praise to Heaven !—
 Now may the weary rest !—Be still !—Who calls
 The night so fearful ?——

[*She dies.*

Elm. No ! she is not dead !—

Ximena !—speak to me !—Oh ! yet a tone
 From that sweet voice, that I may gather in

One more remembrance of its lovely sound,
Ere the deep silence fall !—What ! is all hush'd ?—
No, no !—it cannot be !—How should we bear
The dark misgivings of our souls, if Heaven
Left not such beings with us ?—But is this
Her wonted look ?—too sad a quiet lies
On its dim fearful beauty !—Speak, Ximena !
Speak !—my heart dies within me !—She is gone,
With all her blessed smiles !—My child ! my child !
Where art thou ?—Where is that which answer'd me,
From thy soft shining eyes ?—Hush ! doth she move ?—
One light lock seem'd to tremble on her brow,
As a pulse throbb'd beneath ;—'twas but the voice
Of my despair that stirr'd it !—She is gone !

[*She throws herself on the body.* GONZALEZ enters, alone,
and wounded.

Elm. (*rising as he approaches*). I must not now be scorn'd !—

No, not a look,

A whisper of reproach !—Behold my woe !—
Thou canst not scorn me now !

Gon. Hast thou heard all ?

Elm. Thy daughter on my bosom laid her head,
And pass'd away to rest.—Behold her there,
Even such as death hath made her !⁶

Gon. (*bending over XIMENA'S body*). Thou art gone
A little while before me, oh, my child !

Why should the traveller weep to part with those
That scarce an hour will reach their promised land
Ere he too cast his pilgrim staff away,
And spread his couch beside them ?

Elm. Must it be

Henceforth enough that *once* a thing so fair
Had its bright place amongst us ?—Is this all,
Left for the years to come ?—We will not stay !
Earth's chain each hour grows weaker.

Gon. (*still gazing upon XIMENA*). And thou'rt laid
To slumber in the shadow, blessed child !

Of a yet stainless altar, and beside
A sainted warrior's tomb !—Oh, fitting place
For thee to yield thy pure heroic soul
Back unto Him that gave it !—And thy cheek
Yet smiles in its bright paleness !

Elm. Hadst thou seen

The look with which she pass'd !

Gon. (*still bending over her*). Why, 'tis almost

Siege of Valencia.

Like joy to view thy beautiful repose !
 The faded image of that perfect calm
 Floats, e'en as long-forgotten music, back
 Into my weary heart !—No dark wild spot
 On *thy* clear brow doth tell of bloody hands
 That quench'd young life by violence !—We have seen
 Too much of horror, in one crowded hour,
 To weep for aught, so gently gather'd hence !—
 Oh ! *man* leaves other traces !

Elm. (suddenly starting). It returns
 On my bewilder'd soul !—Went ye not forth
 Unto the rescue ?—And thou'rt here alone !—
 Where are my sons ?

Gon. (solemnly). We were too late !

Elm. Too late !

Hast thou nought else to tell me ?

Gon. I brought back
 From that last field the banner of my sires,
 And my own death-wound.

Elm. Thine !

Gon. Another hour
 Shall hush its throbs for ever. I go hence,
 And with me——

Elm. No !—*Man could* not lift his hands—
 Where hast thou left thy sons ?

Gon. I *have* no sons.

Elm. What hast thou said ?

Gon. That now there lives not one
 To wear the glory of mine ancient house,
 When I am gone to rest.

Elm. (throwing herself on the ground, and speaking in a low hurried voice).

In one brief hour, all gone !—and *such* a death !—
 I see their blood gush forth !—their graceful heads—
 —Take the dark vision from me, oh, my God !
 And such a death for *them* !—I was not there !
 They were but mine in beauty and in joy,
 Not in that mortal anguish !—All, all gone !—
 Why should I struggle more ?—What *is* this Power,
 Against whose might, on all sides pressing us,
 We strive with fierce impatience, which but lays
 Our own frail spirits prostrate ?

(After a long pause.)

Now I know
 Thy hand, my God !—and they are soonest crush'd

That most withstand it !—I resist no more.

(She rises.)

A light, a light springs up from grief and death,
Which with its solemn radiance doth reveal
Why we have thus been tried !

Gon. Then I may still
Fix my last look on thee, in holy love,
Parting, but yet with hope !

Elm. *(falling at his feet).* Canst thou forgive ?—
Oh ! I have driven the arrow to thy heart,
That should have buried it within mine own,
And borne the pang in silence !—I have cast
Thy life's fair honour, in my wild despair,
As an unvalued gem upon the waves,
Whence thou hast snatch'd it back, to bear from earth,
All stainless, on thy breast.—Well hast thou done—
But I—canst thou forgive ?

Gon. Within this hour
I have stood upon that verge whence mortals fall,
And learn'd how 'tis with one whose sight grows dim,
And whose foot trembles on the gulf's dark side.—
Death purifies all feeling—We will part
In pity and in love.

Elm. Death !—And thou too
Art on thy way !—Oh, joy for thee, high heart !
Glory and joy for thee !—The day is closed,
And well and nobly hast thou borne thyself
Through its long battle-toils, though many swords
Have enter'd thine own soul !—But on my head
Recoil the fierce invocings of despair,
And I am left far distanced in the race,
The lonely one of earth !—Ay, this is just.
I am not worthy that upon my breast
In this, thine hour of victory, thou shouldst yield
Thy spirit unto God !

Gon. Thou art ! thou art !
Oh ! a life's love, a heart's long faithfulness,
Ev'n in the presence of eternal things,
Wearing their chasten'd beauty all undimm'd,
Assert their lofty claims ; and these are not
For one dark hour to cancel !—We are here,
Before that altar which received the vows
Of our unbroken youth, and meet it is
For such a witness, in the sight of Heaven,
And in the face of death, whose shadowy arm

Comes dim between us, to record th' exchange
Of our tried hearts' forgiveness.—Who are they,
That in one path have journey'd, needing not
Forgiveness at its close ?

(*A CITIZEN enters hastily.*)

Cit. The Moors ! the Moors !

Gon. How ! is the city storm'd ?
Oh ! righteous Heaven !—for this I look'd not yet !
Hath all been done in vain ?—Why, then, 'tis time
For prayer, and then to rest !

Cit. The sun shall set,
And not a Christian voice be left for prayer,
To-night within Valencia !—Round our walls
The paynim host is gathering for th' assault,
And we have none to guard them.

Gon. Then my place
Is here no longer.—I had hoped to die
Ev'n by the altar and the sepulchre
Of my brave sires—but this was not to be !
Give me my sword again, and lead me hence
Back to the ramparts. I have yet an hour,
And it hath still high duties.—Now, my wife !
The mother of my children—of the dead—
Whom I name unto thee in steadfast hope—
Farewell !

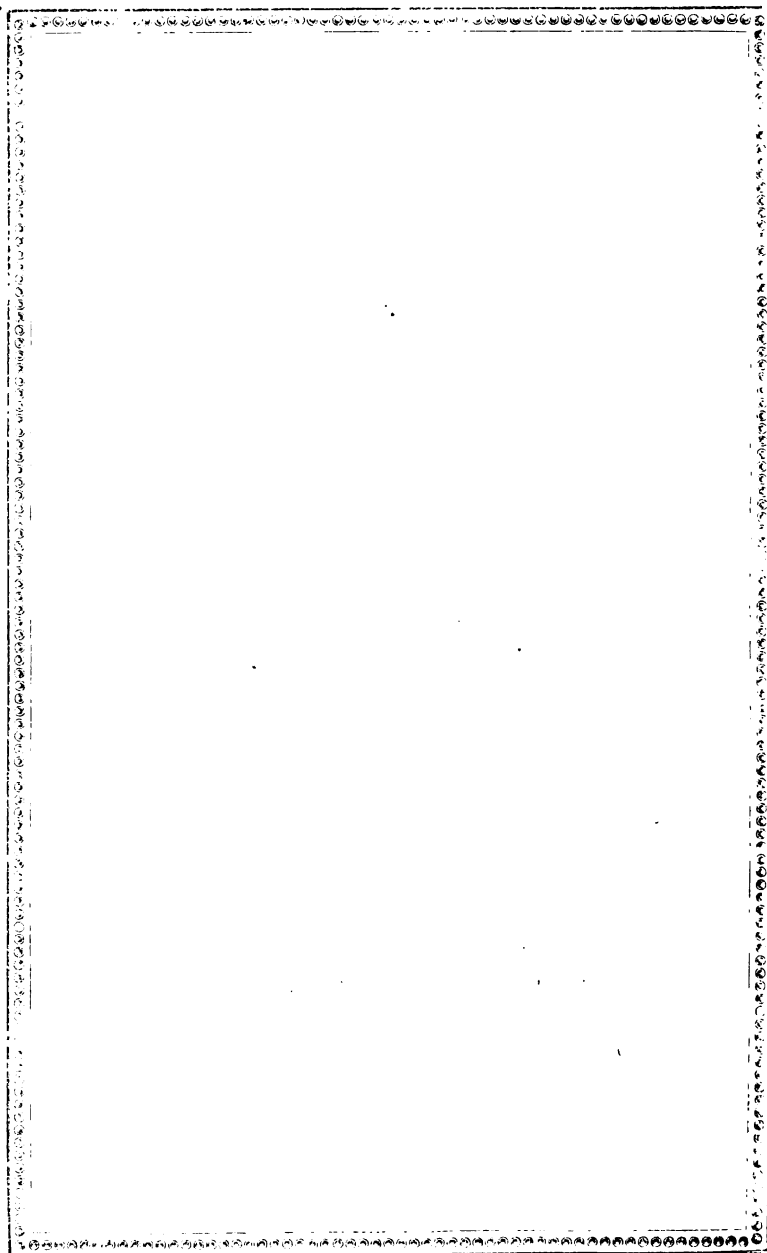
Elm. No, *not* farewell !—My soul hath risen
To mate itself with thine ; and by thy side
Amidst the hurtling lances I will stand,
As one on whom a brave man's love hath been
Wasted not utterly.

Gon. I thank thee, Heaven !
That I have tasted of the awful joy
Which thou hast given to temper hours like this,
With a deep sense of thee, and of thine ends .
In these dread visitings ! (*To Elm.*) We will not part.
But with the spirit's parting !

Elm. One farewell
To her, that mantled with sad loveliness,
Doth slumber at our feet !—My blessed child !
Oh ! in thy heart's affliction thou wert strong,
And holy courage did pervade thy woe,
As light the troubled waters !—Be at peace !
Thou whose bright spirit made itself the soul
Of all that were around thee !—And thy life



Gonzales.—"Lend me thine arm—my brain whirls fearfully."
[p. 114.]



E'en then was struck, and withering at the core !—
Farewell !—thy parting look hath on me fall'n,
E'en as a gleam of heaven, and I am now
More like what thou hast been !—My soul is hush'd,
For a still sense of purer worlds hath sunk
And settled on its depths with that last smile
Which from thine shone forth.—Thou hast not lived
In vain—my child, farewell !

Gov. Surely for thee
Death had no sting, Ximena !—We are blest,
To learn one secret of the shadowy pass,
From such an aspect's calmness. Yet once more
I kiss thy pale young cheek, my broken flower !
In token of th' undying love and hope,
Whose land is far away.

Exeunt.

SCENE—*The Walls of the City.*

HERNANDEZ.—*A few CITIZENS gathered ound him.*

Her. Why, men have cast the treasures, which their lives
Had been worn down in gathering, on the pyre,
Ay, at their household hearths have lit the brand,
Ev'n from that shrine of quiet love to bear
The flame which gave their temples and their homes,
In ashes, to the winds !—They have done this,
Making a blasted void where once the sun
Look'd upon lovely dwellings ; and from earth
Razing all record that on such a spot
Childhood hath sprung, age faded, misery wept,
And frail Humanity knelt before her God ;—
They have done *this*, in their free nobleness,
Rather than see the spoiler's tread pollute
Their holy places !—Praise, high praise be theirs,
Who have left man such lessons !—And these things,
Made your own hills their witnesses !—The sky,
Whose arch bends o'er you, and the seas, wherein
Your rivers pour their gold, rejoicing saw
The altar, and the birth-place, and the tomb,
And all memorials of man's heart and faith,
Thus proudly honour'd !—Be ye not outdone
By the departed !—Though the godless foe
Be close upon us, we have power to snatch
The spoils of victory from him. Be but strong !

A few bright torches and brief moments yet
 Shall baffle his flush'd hope, and we may die,
 Laughing him unto scorn.—Rise, follow me,
 And thou, Valencia ! triumph in thy fate,
 The ruin, not the yoke, and make thy towers
 A beacon unto Spain !

Cit. We'll follow thee !—

Alas ! for our fair city, and the homes
 Wherein we rear'd our children !—But away !
 The Moor shall plant no crescent o'er our fanes !

Voice (from a Tower on the Walls). Succours !—Castile !
 Castile !

Cits. (rushing to the spot). It is even so !
 Now blessing be to Heaven, for we are saved !
 Castile, Castile !

Voice (from the Tower). Line after line of spears,
 Lance after lance, upon the horizon's verge,
 Like festal lights from cities bursting up,
 Doth skirt the plain !—In faith, a noble host !

Another Voice. The Moor hath turn'd him from our walls, to
 front

Th' advancing might of Spain !

Cits. (shouting). Castile ! Castile !

(GONZALEZ enters, supported by ELMINA and a CITIZEN.)

Gon. What shouts of joy are these ?

Her. Hail, chieftain ! hail !

Thus ev'n in death 'tis given thee to receive
 The conqueror's crown !—Behold our God hath heard,
 And arm'd Himself with vengeance !—Lo ! they come !
 The lances of Castile !

Gon. I knew, I knew

Thou wouldst not utterly, my God, forsake
 Thy servant in his need !—My blood and tears
 Have not sunk vainly to th' attesting earth !
 Praise to Thee, thanks and praise, that I have lived
 To see this hour !

Elm. And I too bless Thy name,
 Though thou hast proved me unto agony !
 Oh, God !—Thou God of chastening !

Voice (from the Tower). They move on !
 I see the royal banner in the air,
 With its emblazon'd towers !

Gon. Go, bring ye forth

The banner of the Cid, and plant it here,
 To stream above me, for an answering sign

That the good cross doth hold its lofty place
Within Valencia still!—What see ye now?

Her. I see a kingdom's might upon its path,
Moving, in terrible magnificence,
Unto revenge and victory!—With the flash
Of knightly swords, up-springing from the ranks,
As meteors from a still and gloomy deep,
And with the waving of ten thousand plumes,
Like a land's harvest in the autumn-wind,
And with fierce light, which is not of the sun,
But flung from sheets of steel—it comes, it comes,
The vengeance of our God!

Gon. I hear it now,
The heavy tread of mail-clad multitudes,
Like thunder-showers upon the forest-paths.

Her. Ay, earth knows well the omen of that sound,
And she hath echoes, like a sepulchre's,
Pent in her secret hollows, to respond
Unto the step of death!

Gon. Hark! how the wind
Swells proudly with the battle-march of Spain!
Now the heart feels its power!—A little while
Grant me to live, my God!—What pause is this?

Her. A deep and dreadful one!—the serried files
Level their spears for combat; now the hosts
Look on each other in their brooding wrath,
Silent, and face to face.

VOICES HEARD WITHOUT, CHANTING.

Calm on the bosom of thy God,
Fair spirit! rest thee now!
E'en while with ours thy footsteps trod,
His seal was on thy brow.

Dust, to its narrow house beneath!
Soul, to its place on high!
They that have seen thy look in death
No more may fear to die.

Elm. (to Gon.). It is the death-hymn o'er thy daughter's
bier!—

But I am calm, and e'en like gentle winds,
That music, through the stillness of my heart,
Sends mournful peace.

Gon. Oh ! well those solemn tones
 Accord with such an hour, for all her life
 Breathed of a hero's soul !

[A sound of trumpets and shouting from the plain.]

* *Her.* Now, now they close !—Hark ! what a dull dead sound
 Is in the Moorish war-shout !—I have known
 Such tones prophetic oft.—The shock is given—
 Lo ! they have placed their shields before their hearts,
 And lower'd their lances with the streamers on,
 And on their steeds bend forward !—God for Spain !
 The first bright sparks of battle have been struck
 From spear to spear, across the gleaming field !—
 There is no sight on which the blue sky looks
 To match with this !—'Tis not the gallant crests,
 Nor banners with their glorious blazonry ;
 The very nature and high soul of man
 Doth now reveal itself !

Gon. Oh ! raise me up,
 That I may look upon the noble scene !—
 It will not be !—That this dull mist would pass
 A moment from my sight !—Whence rose that shout,
 As in fierce triumph ?

Her. (clapping his hands). Must I look on this ?
 The banner sinks—'tis taken !

Gon. Whose ?

Her. Castile's !

Gon. Oh, God of Battles !

Elm. Calm thy noble heart !

Thou wilt not pass away without thy meed.
 Nay, rest thee on my bosom.

Her. Cheer thee yet !

Our knights have spur'd to rescue.—There is now
 A whirl, a mingling of all terrible things,
 Yet more appalling than the fierce distinctness
 Wherewith they moved before !—I see tall plumes
 All wildly tossing o'er the battle's tide,
 Sway'd by the wrathful motion, and the press
 Of desperate men, as cedar-boughs by storms.
 Many a white streamer there is dyed with blood,
 Many a false corslet broken, many a shield
 Pierced through !—Now, shout for Santiago, shout !
 Lo ! javelins with a moment's brightness cleave
 The thickening dust, and barbed steeds go down
 With their helm'd riders !—Who, but One, can tell
 How spirits part amidst that fearful rush
 And trampling on of furious multitudes ?

Gon. Thou'rt silent!—See'st thou more?—My soul grows dark.

Her. And dark and troubled, as an angry sea,
Dashing some gallant armament in scorn
Against its rocks, is all on which I gaze!—
I can but tell thee how tall spears are cross'd,
And lances seem to shiver, and proud helms
To lighten with the stroke!—But round the spot,
Where, like a storm-fell'd mast, our standard sank,
The heart of battle burns.

Gon. Where is that spot?

Her. It is beneath the lonely tuft of palms,
That lift their green heads o'er the tumult still.
In calm and stately grace.

Gon. There, didst thou say?
Then God is with us, and we *must* prevail!
For on that spot they died!—My children's blood
Calls on th' avenger thence!

Elm. They perish'd there!—
And the bright locks that waved so joyously
To the free winds, lay trampled and defiled
Ev'n on that place of death!—Oh, Merciful!
Hush the dark thought within me!

Her. (with sudden exultation). Who is he,
On the white steed, and with the castled helm,
And the gold-broider'd mantle, which doth float
E'en like a sunny cloud above the fight;
And the pale cross, which from his breast-plate gleams
With star-like radiance?

Gon. (eagerly). Didst thou say the cross?

Her. On his mail'd bosom shines a broad white cross,
And his long plumage through the darkening air
Streams like a snow-wreath.

Gon. That should be—

Her. The king!—
Was it not told us how he sent, of late,
To the Cid's tomb, e'en for the silver cross,
Which he who slumbers there was wont to bind
O'er his brave heart in fight?⁹

Gon. (springing up joyfully). My king! my king!
Now all good saints for Spain!—My noble king!
And thou art there!—That I might look once more
Upon thy face!—But yet I thank thee, Heaven!
That thou hast sent him, from my dying hands
Thus to receive his city!

[*He sinks back into ELMINA'S arms.*

Her. He hath clear'd

A pathway midst the combat, and the light
Follows his charge through yon close living mass,
E'en as the gleam on some proud vessel's wake
Along the stormy waters!—'Tis redeem'd—
The castled banner!—It is flung once more
In joy and glory, to the sweeping winds!—
There seems a wavering through the Paynim hosts—
Castile doth press them sore—Now, now rejoice!

Gon. What hast thou seen!

Her. Abdullah falls! He falls!

The man of blood!—the spoiler!—he hath sunk
In our king's path!—Well hath that royal sword
Avenged thy cause, Gonzalez!

They give way,
The Crescent's van is broken!—On the hills
And the dark pine-woods may the infidel
Call vainly, in his agony of fear,
To cover him from vengeance!—Lo! they fly!
They of the forest and the wilderness
Are scatter'd, e'en as leaves upon the wind!
Woe to the sons of Afric!—Let the plains,
And the vine-mountains, and Hesperian seas,
Take their dead unto them!—that blood shall wash
Our soil from stains of bondage.

Gon. (*attempting to raise himself*). Set me free!
Come with me forth, for I must greet my king,
After his battle-field!

Her. Oh, blest in death!
Chosen of Heaven, farewell!—Look on the Cross,
And part from earth in peace!

Gon. Now charge once more!
God is with Spain, and Santiago's sword
Is reddening all the air!—Shout forth "Castile!"
The day is ours!—I go; but fear ye not!
For Afric's lance is broken, and my sons
Have won their first good field!

[*He dies.*]

Elm. Look on me yet!
Speak one farewell, my husband!—Must thy voice
Enter my soul no more!—Thine eye is fixed—
Now is my life uprooted,—and 'tis well.

(*A sound of triumphant Music is heard, and many Castilian
Knights and Soldiers enter.*)

A Citizen. Hush your triumphal sounds, although ye come
E'en as deliverers!—But the noble dead,

And those that mourn them, claim from human hearts
Deep silent reverence.

Elm. (rising proudly). No, swell forth, Castile !
Thy trumpet-music, till the seas and heavens,
And the deep hills, give every stormy note
Echoes to ring through Spain !—How, know ye not
That all array'd for triumph, crown'd and robed
With the strong spirit which hath saved the land,
Ev'n now a conqueror to his rest is gone ?—
Fear not to break that sleep, but let the wind
Swell on with victory's shout !—*He* will not hear—
Hath earth a sound more sad ?

Her. Lift ye the dead,
And bear him with the banner of his race
Waving above him proudly, as it waved
O'er the Cid's battles, to the tomb, wherein
His warrior-sires are gather'd. [*They raise the body.*]

Elm. Aye, 'tis thus
Thou shouldst be honour'd !—And I follow thee
With an unfaltering and lofty step,
To that last home of glory. She that wears
In her deep heart the memory of thy love
Shall thence draw strength for all things, till the God,
Whose hand around her hath unpeopled earth,
Looking upon her still and chasten'd soul,
Call it once more to thine !

(*To the Castilians.*)

Awake, I say,
Tambour and trumpet, wake !—And let the land
Through all her mountains hear your funeral peal !—
So should a hero pass to his repose. [*Exeunt omnes.*]

NOTES

NOTE 1.

Mountain Christians, those natives of Spain, who, under their prince, Pelayo, took refuge amongst the mountains of the northern provinces, where they maintained their religion and liberty, whilst the rest of their country was overrun by the Moors.

NOTE 2.

Oh, free doth sorrow pass, &c.

Frey geht das Unglück durch die ganze Erde.

Schiller's Death of Wallenstein, act iv. sc. 2.

NOTE 3.

Tizona, the fire-brand. The name of the Cid's favourite sword, taken in battle from the Moorish king Bucar.

NOTE 4.

How he won Valencia from the Moor, &c.

Valencia, which has been repeatedly besieged, and taken by the armies of different nations, remained in the possession of the Moors for an hundred and seventy years after the Cid's death. It was regained from them by King Don Jayme of Aragon, surnamed the Conqueror; after whose success I have ventured to suppose it governed by a descendant of the Campeador.

NOTE 5.

It was a Spanish tradition, that the great bell of the cathedral of Saragossa always tolled spontaneously before a king of Spain died.

NOTE 6.

"El que en buen hora nasco;" he that was born in happy hour. An appellation given to the Cid in the ancient chronicles.

NOTE 7.

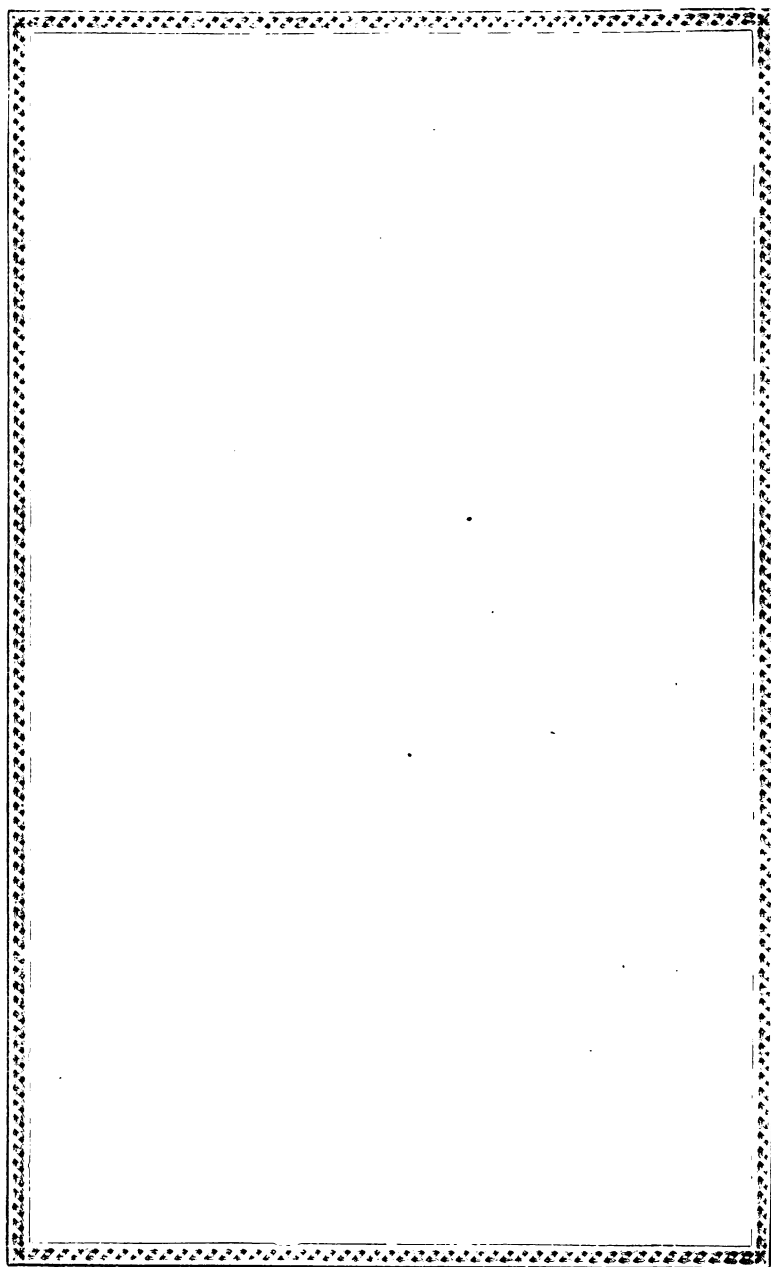
For this, and the subsequent allusions to Spanish legends, see *The Romances and Chronicle of the Cid*.

NOTE 8.

"La voilà, telle que la mort nous l'a faite!"—*Bossuet, Oraisons Funèbres*.

NOTE 9.

This circumstance is recorded of King Don Alfonso, the last of that name. He sent to the Cid's tomb for the cross which that warrior was accustomed to wear upon his breast when he went to battle, and had it made into one for himself; "because of the faith which he had, that through it he should obtain the victory."—*Southey's Chronicle of the Cid*.





SONGS OF THE CID.



THE following ballads are not translations from the Spanish, but are founded upon some of the "wild and wonderful" traditions preserved in the romances of that language, and the ancient poem of the Cid.



THE CID'S DEPARTURE INTO EXILE.

With sixty knights in his gallant train,
Went forth the Campeador of Spain ;
For wild sierras and plains afar,
He left the lands of his own Bivar'.

To march o'er field, and to watch in tent,
From his home in good Castile he went ;
To the wasting siege and the battle's van,—
For the noble Cid was a banish'd man !

Through his olive-woods the morn-breeze play'd,
And his native streams wild music made,
And clear in the sunshine his vineyards lay,
When for march and combat he took his way.

With a thoughtful spirit his way he took,
And he turn'd his steed for a parting look,
For a parting look at his own fair towers ;—
Oh ! the Exile's heart hath weary hours !

The Cid's Death-bed.

The pennons were spread, and the band array'd,
But the Cid at the threshold a moment stay'd ;
It *was* but a moment—the halls were lone,
And the gates of his dwelling all open thrown.

There was not a steed in the empty stall,
Nor a spear nor a cloak on the naked wall,
Nor a hawk on the perch, nor a seat at the door,
Nor the sound of a step on the hollow floor.²

Then a dim tear swell'd to the warrior's eye
As the voice of his native groves went by ;
And he said—" My foemen their wish have won—
—Now the will of God be in all things done !"

But the trumpet blew, with its note of cheer,
And the winds of the morning swept off the tear,
And the fields of his glory lay distant far,—
He is gone from the towers of his own Bivar !

THE CID'S DEATH-BED.

It was an hour of grief and fear
Within Valencia's walls,
When the blue spring-heaven lay still and clear
Above her marble halls.

There were pale cheeks and troubled eyes,
And steps of hurrying feet,
Where the Zambra's³ notes were wont to rise,¹
Along the sunny street.

It was an hour of fear and grief,
On bright Valencia's shore,
For Death was busy with her chief,
The noble Campeador.

The Moor-king's barks were on the deep,
With sounds and signs of war,
For the Cid was passing to his sleep
In the silent Alcazar.

The Cid's Death-bed.

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No moan was heard through the towers of state,
No weeper's aspect seen,
But by the couch Ximena sate,
With pale, yet stedfast mien.⁴

Stillness was round the leader's bed,
Warriors stood mournful nigh,
And banners, o'er his glorious head,
Were drooping heavily.

And feeble grew the conquering hand,
And cold the valiant breast ;—
He had fought the battles of the land,
And his hour was come to rest.

What said the Ruler of the field ?—
His voice is faint and low ;
The breeze that creeps o'er his lance and shield
Hath louder accents now.

" Raise ye no cry, and let no moan
Be made when I depart ;
The Moor must hear no dirge's tone ;
Be ye of mighty heart !

" Let the cymbal-clash and the rumpet-strain
From your walls ring far and shrill,
And fear ye not, for the saints of Spain
Shall grant you victory still.

" And gird my form with mail-array,
And set me on my steed,
So go ye forth on your funeral-way,
And God shall give you speed.

" Go with the dead in the front of war,
All arm'd with sword and helm,⁵
And march by the camp of King Bucar,
For the good Castilian realm.

" And let me slumber in the soil
Which gave my fathers birth ;
I have closed my day of battle-toil,
And my course is done on earth."

The Cid's Funeral Procession.

—Now wave ye glorious banners, wave !
Through the lattice a wind sweeps by,
And the arms, o'er the death-bed of the brave,
Send forth a hollow sigh.

Now wave, ye banners of many a fight !
As the fresh wind o'er you sweeps ;
The wind and the banners fall hush'd as night,
The Campeador—he sleeps !

Sound the battle-horn on the breeze of morn,
And swell out the trumpet's blast,
Till the notes prevail o'er the voice of wail,
For the noble Cid hath pass'd !

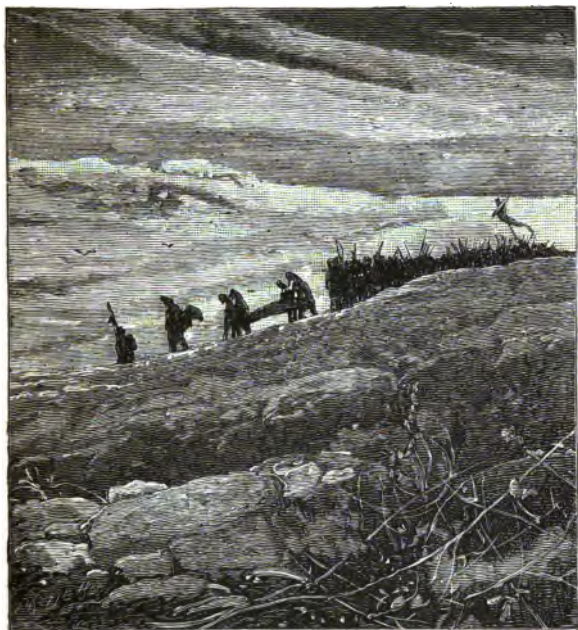
THE CID'S FUNERAL PROCESSION.

THE Moor hath beleaguer'd Valencia's towers,
And lances gleam'd up through her citron-bowers,
And the tents of the desert had girt her plain,
And camels were trampling the vines of Spain ;
For the Cid was gone to rest.

There were men from wilds where the death-wind sweeps,
There were spears from hills where the lion sleeps,
There were bows from sands where the ostrich runs,
For the shrill horn of Afric had call'd her sons
To the battles of the West.

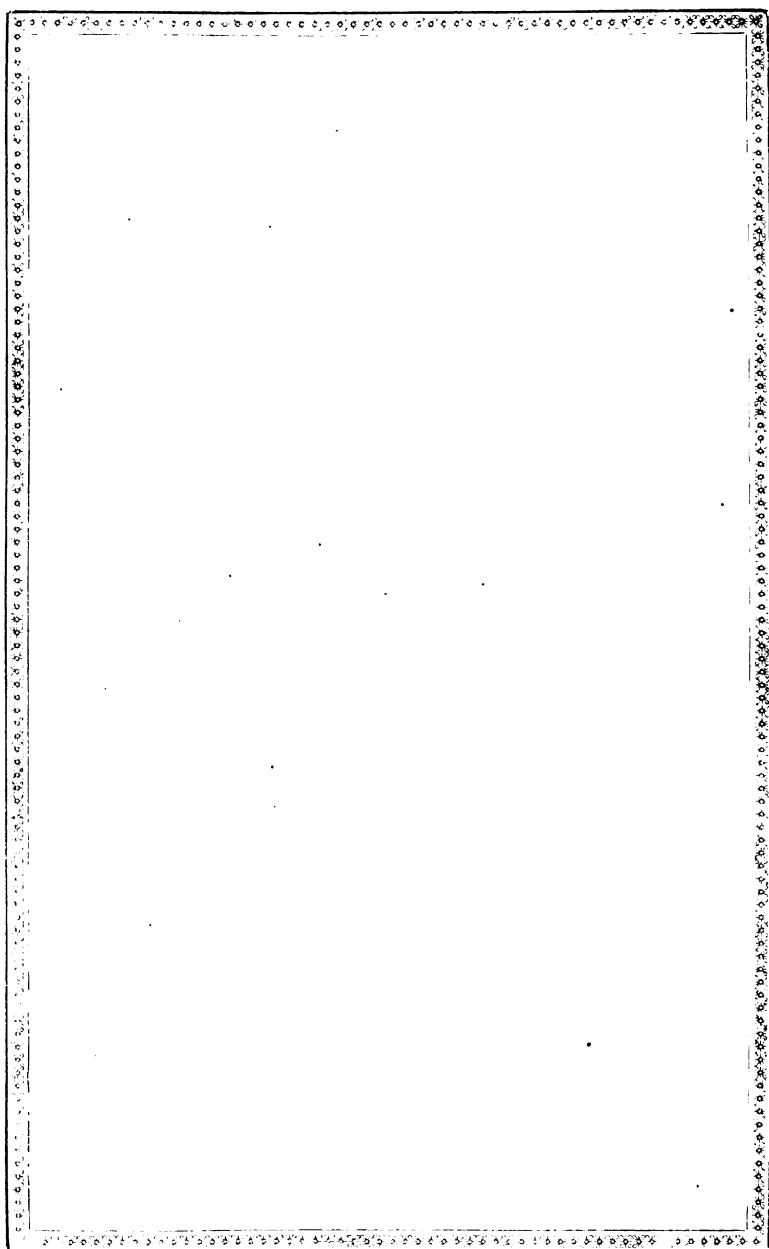
The midnight bell, o'er the dim seas heard,
Like the roar of waters, the air had stirr'd ;
The stars were shining o'er tower and wave
And the camp lay hush'd, as a wizard's cave ;
But the Christians woke that night.

They rear'd the Cid on his barbed steed,
Like a warrior mail'd for the hour of need,
And they fix'd the sword in the cold right hand
Which had fought so well for his fathers' land
And the shield from his neck hung bright.



**"Lift from the ground my noble son,
And bear him homewards on his bloody shield!"**

[P. 153.]



There was arming heard in Valencia's halls,
There was vigil kept on the rampart walls ;
Stars had not faded, nor clouds turn'd red,
When the knights had girded the noble dead,
And the burial-train moved out.

With a measur'd pace, as the pace of one,
Was the still death-march of the host begun ;
With a silent step went the cuirass'd bands,
Like a lion's tread on the burning sands,
And they gave no battle-shout.

When the first went forth, it was midnight deep,
In heaven was the moon, in the camp was sleep.
When the last through the city's gates had gone,
O'er tent and rampart the bright day shone,
With a sun-burst from the sea.

There were knights five hundred went arm'd before,
And Bermudez the Cid's green standard bore ;⁶
To its last fair field, with the break of morn,
Was the glorious banner in silence borne,
On the glad wind streaming free.

And the Campeador came stately then,
Like a leader circled with steel-clad men !
The helmet was down o'er the face of the dead,
But his steed went proud, by a warrior led,
For he knew that the Cid was there.

He was there, the Cid, with his own good sword,
And Ximena following her noble lord ;
Her eye was solemn, her step was slow,
But there rose not a sound of war or woe,
Not a whisper on the air.

The halls in Valencia were still and lone,
The churches were empty, the masses done ;
There was not a voice through the wide streets far,
Nor a foot-fall heard in the Alcazar,—
So the burial-train moved out.

With a measured pace, as the pace of one,
Was the still death-march of the host begun ;
With a silent step went the cuirass'd bands,
Like a lion's tread on the burning sands ;—
And they gave no battle-shout.

But the deep hills peal'd with a cry ere long,
When the Christians burst on the Paynim throng !—
With a sudden flash of the lance and spear,
And a charge of the war-steed in full career,
It was Alver Fañez came !⁷

He that was wrapt with no funeral shroud,
Had pass'd before, like a threatening cloud !
And the storm rush'd down on the tented plain,
And the Archer-Queen,⁸ with her bands lay slain,
For the Cid upheld his fame.

Then a terror fell on the King Bucar,
And the Lybian kings who had join'd his war ;
And their hearts grew heavy, and died away,
And their hands could not wield an assagay,
For the dreadful things they saw !

For it seem'd where Minaya his onset made,
There were seventy thousand knights array'd,
All white as the snow on Nevada's steep,
And they came like the foam of a roaring deep ;—
'Twas a sight of fear and awe !

And the crested form of a warrior tall,
With a sword of fire, went before them all ;
With a sword of fire, and a banner pale,
And a blood-red cross on his shadowy mail,
He rode in the battle's van !

There was fear in the path of his dim white horse,
There was death in the Giant-warrior's course !
Where his banner stream'd with its ghostly light,
Where his sword blazed out, there was hurrying flight,
For it seem'd not the sword of man !

The field and the river grew darkly red,
As the kings and leaders of Afric fled ;
There was work for the men of the Cid that day !—
They were weary at eve, when they ceased to slay,
As reapers whose task is done !

The kings and the leaders of Afric fled !
The sails of their galleys in haste were spread ;
But the sea had its share of the Paynim-slain,
And the bow of the desert was broke in Spain ;—
So the Cid to his grave pass'd on !

THE CID'S RISING.

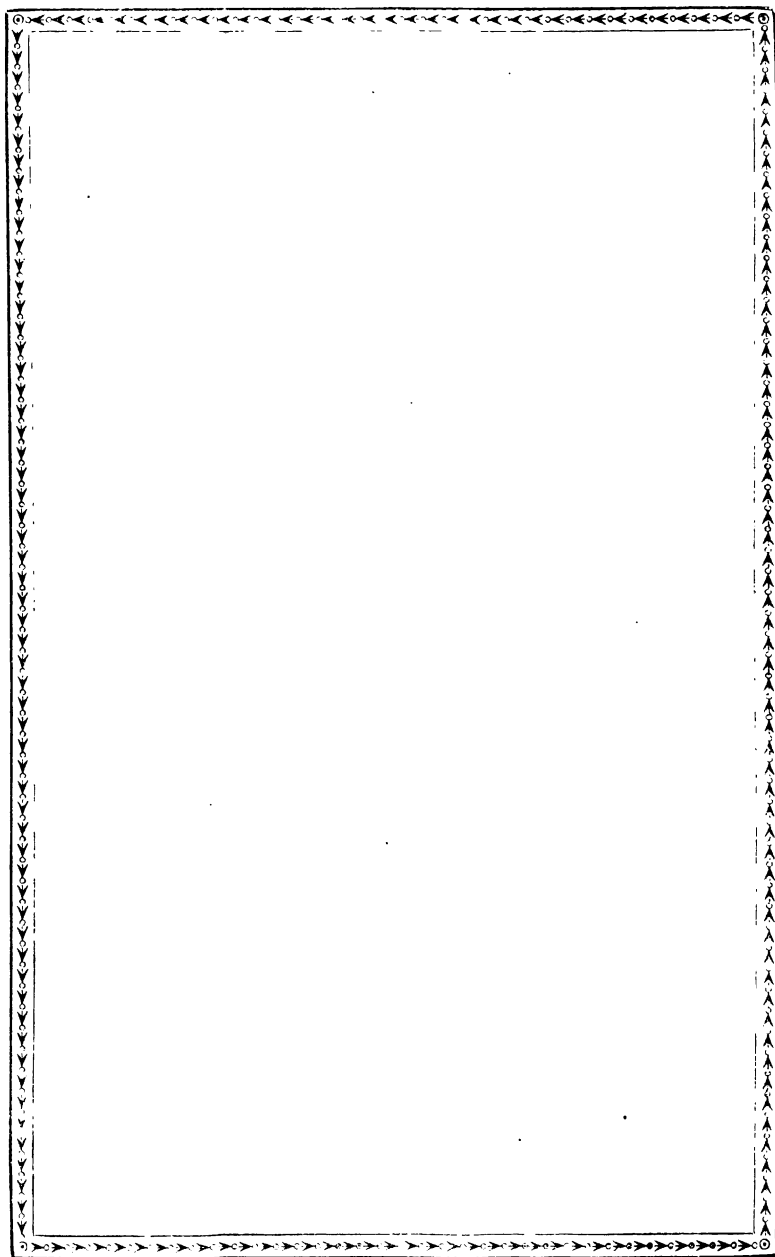
'Twas the deep mid-watch of the silent night,
And Leon in slumber lay,
When a sound went forth, in rushing night,
Like an army on its way !"
In the stillness of the hour,
When the dreams of sleep have power,
And men forget the day.

Through the dark and lonely streets it went,
Till the slumberers woke in dread ;—
The sound of a passing armament,
With the charger's stony tread.
There was heard no trumpet's peal,
But the heavy tramp of steel,
As a host's, to combat led.

Through the dark and lonely streets it pass'd,
And the hollow pavement rang,
And the towers, as with a sweeping blast,
Rock'd to the stormy clang !
But the march of the viewless train
Went on to a royal fane,
Where a priest his night-hymn sang.

There was knocking that shook the marble floor,
And a voice at the gate, which said—
"That the Cid Ruy Diez, the Campeador,
Was there in his arms array'd ;
And that with him, from the tomb,
Had the Count Gonzalez come,
With a host, uprisen to aid !

"And they came for the buried king that lay
At rest in that ancient fane ;
For he must be arm'd on the battle-day,
With them, to deliver Spain !" —
Then the march went sounding on,
And the Moors, by noontide sun,
Were dust on Tolosa's plain.



NOTES.

NOTE 1.

BIVAR, the supposed birth-place of the Cid, was a castle, about two leagues from Burgos.

NOTE 2.

Tornaba la cabeza, e estabalos catando :
Vio puertas abiertas, e uzos sin cañados,
Alcandaras vacias, sin pieles e sin mantos :
E sin falcones, e sin adtores mudados.
Sospirò mio Cid. *Poem of the Cid.*

NOTE 3.

The zambra, a Moorish dance. When Valencia was taken by the Cid, many of the Moorish families chose to remain there, and reside under his government.

NOTE 4.

The calm fortitude of Ximena is frequently alluded to in the romances.

NOTE 5.

Banderas antiguas, tristes
De victorias un tiempo amadas,
Tremolando estan al viento
Y lloran aunque no hablan, &c.

Herder's translation of these romances (Der Cid, nach Spanischen Romanzen besungen) are remarkable for their spirit and scrupulous fidelity.

NOTE 6.

"And while they stood there they saw the Cid Ruy Diez coming up with three hundred knights ; for he had not been in the battle, and they knew his *green pennon*."—*Southey's Chronicle of the Cid*.

NOTE 7.

Alvar Fañez Minaya, one of the Cid's most distinguished warriors.

NOTE 8.

—The archer queen—

A Moorish Amazon, who, with a band of female warriors, accompanied King Bucar from Africa. Her arrows were so unerring, that she obtained the name of the Star of archers.

Una Mora muy gallarda,
Gran maestra en el tirar,
Con Saetas del Aljava,
De los arcos de Turquía
Estrella era nombrada,
Por la destreza que avia
En el herir de la Xára.

NOTE 9.

See *Southey's Chronicle of the Cid*, p. 352.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

BELSHAZZAR'S FEAST.

'Twas night in Babylon: yet many a beam
Of lamps, far-glittering from her domes on high,
Shone, brightly mingling in Euphrates' stream,
With the clear stars of that Chaldean sky,
Whose azure knows no cloud :—each whisper'd sigh
Of the soft night-breeze through her terrace-bowers
Bore deepening tones of joy and melody,
O'er an illumin'd wilderness of flowers ;
And the glad city's voice went up from all her towers.

But prouder mirth was in the kingly hall,
Where, midst adoring slaves, a gorgeous band !
High at the stately midnight festival,
Belshazzar sat enthroned.—There Luxury's hand
Had shower'd around all treasures that expand
Beneath the burning East ;—all gems that pour
The sunbeams back ;—all sweets of many a land,
Whose gales waft incense from their spicy shore ;—
But mortal Pride look'd on, and still demanded more.

With richer zest the banquet may be fraught,
A loftier theme may swell th' exulting strain !
The Lord of nations spoke,—and forth were brought
The spoils of Salem's devastated fane :
Thrice holy vessels !—pure from earthly stain,
And set apart, and sanctified to Him,
Who deign'd within the oracle to reign,
Reveal'd, yet shadow'd ; making noon-day dim,
To that most glorious cloud between the Cherubim.

They came, and louder peal'd the voice of song,
And pride flash'd brighter from the kindling eye,
And He who sleeps not heard th' elated throng,
In mirth that plays with thunderbolts, defy
The Rock of Zion !—Fill the nectar high,
High in the cups of consecrated gold !
And crown the bowl with garlands, ere they die,
And bid the censers of the Temple hold
Offerings to Babel's gods, the mighty ones of old !

Peace !—is it but a phantom of the brain,
Thus shadow'd forth the senses to appal,
Yon fearful vision ?—Who shall gaze again
To search its cause ?—Along the illumin'd wall,
Startling, yet riveting the eyes of all,
Darkly it moves,—a hand, a human hand,
O'er the bright lamps of that resplendent hall
In silence tracing, as a mystic wand,
Words all unknown, the tongue of some far distant land.

There are pale cheeks around the regal board,
And quivering limbs, and whispers deep and low,
And fitful starts !—the wine, in triumph pour'd,
Untasted foams, the song hath ceas'd to flow,
The waving censer drops to earth—and lo !
The King of Men, the Ruler, girt with might,
Trembles before a shadow !—Say not so !—
The child of dust, with guilt's foreboding sight,
Shrinks from the Dread Unknown, th' avenging Infinite !

But haste ye !—bring Chaldea's gifted seers,
The men of prescience !—haply to *their* eyes,
Which track the future through the rolling spheres,
Yon mystic sign may speak in prophecies.
They come—the readers of the midnight skies,
They that give voice to visions—but in vain !
Still wrapt in clouds the awful secret lies,
It hath no language midst the starry train,
Earth has no gifted tongue Heaven's mysteries to explain.

Then stood forth one, a child of other sires,
And other inspiration !—One of those
Who on the willows hung their captive lyres,
And sat, and wept, where Babel's river flows.
His eye was bright, and yet the deep repose

Of his pale features half o'eraw'd the mind,
And imaged forth a soul, whose joys and woes
Were of a loftier stamp than aught assign'd
To Earth; a being seal'd and sever'd from mankind.

Yes!—what was earth to him, whose spirit pass'd
Time's utmost bounds?—on whose unshrinking sight
Ten thousand shapes of burning glory cast
Their full resplendence?—Majesty and might
Were in his dreams;—for him the veil of light
Shrouding heaven's inmost sanctuary and throne,
The curtain of th' unutterably bright
Was rais'd!—to him, in fearful splendour shown,
Ancient of days! e'en thou, mad'st thy dread presence known.

He spoke:—the shadows of the things to come
Pass'd o'er his soul:—"O King, elate in pride!
God hath sent forth the writing of thy doom,
The one, the living God, by thee defied!
He, in whose balance earthly lords are tried,
Hath weigh'd, and found thee wanting. 'Tis decreed
The conqueror's hands thy kingdom shall divide,
The stranger to thy throne of power succeed!
The days are full, they come;—the Persian and the Mede!"

There fell a moment's thrilling silence round,
A breathless pause! the hush of hearts that beat
And limbs that quiver:—is there not a sound,
A gathering cry, a tread of hurrying feet?—
'Twas but some echo, in the crowded street,
Of far-heard revelry; the shout, the song.
The measured dance to music wildly sweet,
That speeds the stars their joyous course along;—
Away! nor let a dream disturb the festal throng!

Peace yet again!—Hark! steps in tumult flying,
Steeds rushing on, as o'er a battle-field!
The shout of hosts exulting or defying,
The press of multitudes that strive or yield!
And the loud startling clash of spear and shield,
Sudden as earthquake's burst!—and, blent with these,
The last wild shriek of those whose doom is seal'd
In their full mirth!—all deepening on the breeze
As the long stormy roar of far-advancing seas!

And nearer yet the trumpet's blast is swelling,
Loud, shrill, and savage, drowning every cry!

Belshazzar's Feast.

And lo ! the spoiler in the regal dwelling,
 Death bursting on the halls of revelry !
 Ere on their brows one fragile rose-leaf die,
 The sword hath raged through joy's devoted train,
 Ere one bright star be faded from the sky,
 Red flames, like banners, wave from dome and fane,
 Empire is lost and won, Belshazzar with the slain.

Fall'n is the golden city ! in the dust
 Spoiled of her crown, dismantled of her state,
 She that hath made the Strength of Towers her trust,
 Weeps by her dead, supremely desolate !
 She that beheld the nations at her gate,
 Thronging in homage, shall be call'd no more
 Lady of kingdoms !—Who shall mourn her fate ?
 Her guilt is full, her march of triumph o'er ;—
 What widow'd land shall now *her* widowhood deplore ?

Sit thou in silence ! Thou that wert enthroned
 On many waters ! thou, whose augurs read
 The language of the planets, and disown'd
 The mighty name it blazons !—Veil thy head,
 Daughter of Babylon ! the sword is red
 From thy destroyers' harvest, and the yoke
 Is on thee, O most proud !—for thou hast said,
 "I am, and none beside !"—Th' Eternal spoke,
 Thy glory was a spoil, thine idol-gods were broke.

But go thou forth, O Israel ! wake ! rejoice !
 Be clothed with strength, as in thine ancient day.
 Renew the sound of harps, th' exulting voice,
 The mirth of timbrels !—loose the chain, and say
 God hath redeem'd his people !—from decay
 The silent and the trampled shall arise ;—
 Awake ; put on thy beautiful array,
 Oh long-forsaken Zion !—to the skies
 Send up on every wind thy choral melodies !

And lift thy head !—Behold thy sons returning,
 Redeem'd from exile, ransom'd from the chain !
 Light hath revisited the house of mourning ;
 She that on Judah's mountains wept in vain
 Because her children were not—dwells again
 Girt with the lovely !—through thy streets once more,
 City of God ! shall pass the bridal train,
 And the bright lamps their festive radiance pour,
 And the triumphal hymns thy joy of youth restore !

THE CHIEFTAIN'S SON.

Yes, it is ours !—the field is won,
A dark and evil field !
Lift from the ground my noble son,
And bear him homewards on his bloody shield !

Let me not hear your trumpets ring,
Swell not the battle-horn !
Thoughts far too sad those notes will bring,
When to the grave my glorious flower is borne

Speak not of victory !—in the name
There is too much of woe !
Hush'd be the empty voice of Fame—
Call me back *this* whose graceful head is low.

Speak not of victory !—from my halls
The sunny hour is gone !
The ancient banner on my walls
Must sink ere long—I had but him—but one !

Within the dwelling of my sires
The hearths will soon be cold,
With me must die the beacon-fires
That stream'd at midnight from the mountain-hold.

And let them fade, since *this* must be,
My lovely and my brave !
Was thy bright blood pour'd forth for me,
And is there but for stately youth a grave ?

Speak to me once again, my boy !
Wilt thou not hear my call ?
Thou wert so full of life and joy,
I had not dreamt of *this*—that thou couldst fall.

Thy mother watches from the steep
For thy returning plume ;
How shall I tell her that thy sleep
Is of the silent house, th' untimely tomb ?

Thou didst not seem as one to die,
 With all thy young renown !—
 Ye saw his falchion's flash on high,
 In the mid-fight, when spears and crests went down !

Slow be your march !—the field is won !
 A dark and evil field !
 Lift from the ground my noble son,
 And bear him homewards on his bloody shield.

THE FUNERAL GENIUS:

AN ANCIENT STATUE.

"Debout, couronné de fleurs, les bras élevés et posés sur sa tête, et le dos appuyé contre un pin, ce génie semble exprimer par son attitude le repos des morts. Les bas-reliefs des tombeaux offrent souvent des figures semblables."—
 VISCONTI, *Description des Antiques du Musée Royal.*

THOU shouldst be look'd on when the starlight falls
 Through the blue stillness of the summer air,
 Not by the torch-fire wavering on the walls ;
 It hath too fitful and too wild a glare !
 And thou !—thy rest, the soft, the lovely, seems
 To ask light steps, that will not break its dreams.

Flowers are upon thy brow ; for so the dead
 Were crown'd of old, with pale spring flowers like these :
 Sleep on thine eye hath sunk ; yet softly shed,
 As from the wing of some faint southern breeze :
 And the pine-boughs o'ershadow thee with gloom
 Which of the grove seems breathing—not the tomb.

They fear'd not death, whose calm and gracious thought
 Of the last hour, hath settled thus in thee !

They who thy wreath of pallid roses wrought,
And laid thy head against the forest-tree,
As that of one, by music's dreamy close,
On the wood-violets lull'd to deep repose.

They fear'd not death !—yet who shall say his touch
Thus lightly falls on gentle things and fair ?
Doth he bestow, or will he leave so much
Of tender beauty as thy features wear ?
Thou sleeper of the bower ! on whose young eyes
So still a night, a night of summer, lies !

Had they seen aught like thee ?—Did some fair boy
Thus, with his graceful hair, before them rest ?—
His graceful hair, no more to wave in joy,
But drooping, as with heavy dews oppress'd !
And his eye veil'd so softly by its fringe,
And his lip faded to the white-rose tinge ?

Oh ! happy, if to them the one dread hour
Made known its lessons from a brow like thine !
If all their knowledge of the spoiler's power
Came by a look, so tranquilly divine !—
Let him, who *thus* hath seen the lovely part,
Hold well that image to his thoughtful heart !

But thou, fair slumberer ! was there less of woe,
Or love, or terror, in the days of old,
That men pour'd out their gladdening spirit's flow,
Like sunshine, on the desolate and cold,
And gave thy semblance to the shadowy king
Who for deep souls had then a deeper sting ?

In the dark bosom of the earth they laid
Far more than we—for loftier faith is ours !
Their gems were lost in ashes—yet they made
The grave a place of beauty and of flowers,
With fragrant wreaths, and summer boughs array'd,
And lovely sculpture gleaming through the shade.

Is it for *us* a darker gloom to shed
O'er its dim precincts ?—do we not entrust
But for a time, its chambers with our dead,
And strew immortal seed upon the dust ?—
Why should *we* dwell on that which lies beneath,
When living light hath touch'd the brow of death ?

THE TOMBS OF PLATÆA.

FROM A PAINTING BY WILLIAMS.

AND there they sleep !—the men who stood
In arms before th' exulting sun,
And bathed their spears in Persian blood,
And taught the earth how freedom might be won.

They sleep !—th' Olympic wreaths are dead,
Th' Athenian lyres are hush'd and gone ;
The Dorian voice of song is fled—
Slumber, ye mighty ! slumber deeply on !

They sleep, and seems not all around
As hallow'd unto glory's tomb ?
Silence is on the battle-ground,
The heavens are loaded with a breathless gloom.

And stars are watching on their height,
But dimly seen through mist and cloud ;
And still and solemn is the light
Which folds the plain, as with a glimmering shroud.

And thou, pale night-queen ! here thy beams
Are not as those the shepherd loves,
Nor look they down on shining streams,
By Naiads haunted, in their laurel groves :

Thou seest no pastoral hamlet sleep,
In shadowy quiet, midst its vines ;
No temple gleaming from the steep,
Midst the grey olives, or the mountain pines :

But o'er a dim and boundless waste,
Thy rays, e'en like a tomb-lamp's, brood,
Where man's departed steps are traced
But by his dust, amidst the solitude.

And be it thus !—What slave shall tread
O'er freedom's ancient battle-plain ?
Let deserts wrap the glorious dead,
When their bright land sits weeping o'er her chains :

Here, where the Persian clarion rung,
And where the Spartan sword flash'd high,
And where the Pæan strains were sung,
From year to year swell'd on by liberty !

Here should no voice, no sound, be heard,
Until the bonds of Greece be riven,
Save of the leader's charging word,
Or the shrill trumpet, pealing up through heaven !

Rest in your silent homes, ye brave !
No vines festoon your lonely tree ! *
No harvest o'er your war-field wave,
Till rushing winds proclaim—the land is free !

* A single tree appears in Mr. Williams's impressive picture.

THE VIEW FROM CASTRI.

FROM A PAINTING BY WILLIAMS.

THERE have been bright and glorious pageants here,
 Where now grey stones and moss-grown columns lie ;
 There have been words, which earth grew pale to hear,
 Breath'd from the cavern's misty chambers nigh :
 There have been voices, through the sunny sky,
 And the pine-woods, their choral hymn-notes sending,
 And reeds and lyres, their Dorian melody,
 With incense-clouds around the temple blending,
 And throngs, with laurel-boughs, before the altar bending.

There have been treasures of the seas and isles
 Brought to the day-god's now forsaken throne ;
 Thunders have peal'd along the rock-defiles,
 When the far-echoing battle-horn made known
 That foes were on their way !—the deep wind's moan
 Hath chill'd th' invader's heart with secret fear,
 And from the Sybil-grottoes, wild and lone,
 Storms have gone forth, which, in their fierce career,
 From his bold hand have struck the banner and the spear.

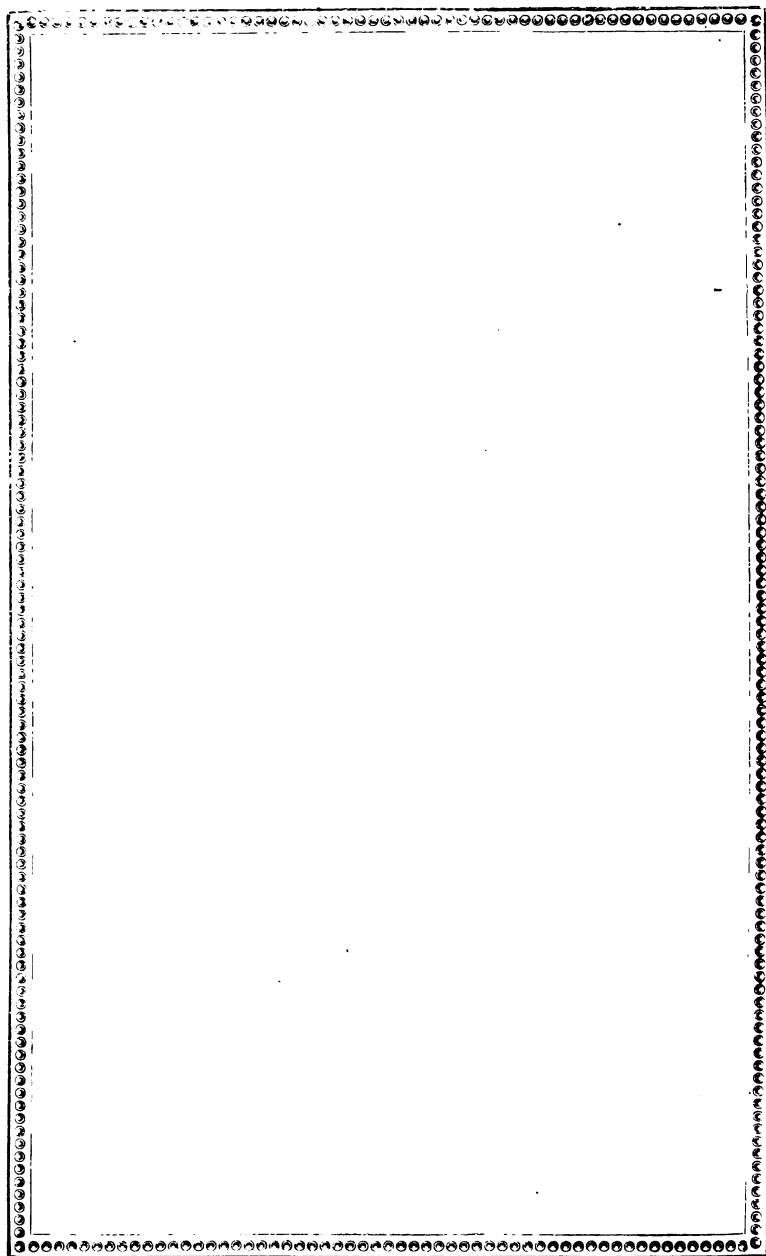
The shrine hath sunk !—but thou unchanged art there !
 Mount of the voice and vision, robed with dreams !
 Unchanged, and rushing through the radiant air,
 With thy dark waving-pines, and flashing streams,
 And all thy founts of song ! their bright course teems
 With inspiration yet ; and each dim haze,
 Or golden cloud which floats around thee, seems
 As with its mantle, veiling from our gaze
 The mysteries of the past, the gods of elder days !

Away, vain phantasies !—doth less of power
 Dwell round thy summit, or thy cliffs invest,
 Though in deep stillness now, the ruin's flower
 Wave o'er the pillars mouldering on thy breast ?—



"Her step was 'midst the summer flowers."

[p. 201.



Lift through the free blue heavens thine arrowy crest !
Let the great rocks their solitude regain !
No Delphian lyres now break thy noontide rest
With their full chords :—but silent be the strain !
Thou hast a mightier voice to speak th' Eternal's reign !

THE FESTAL HOUR.

WHEN are the lessons given
That shake the startled earth ?—When wakes the foe,
While the friend sleeps !—When falls the traitor's blow ?
When are proud sceptres riven,
High hopes o'erthrown ?—It is, when lands rejoice,
When cities blaze, and lift th' exulting voice,
And wave their banners to the kindling heaven !

Fear ye the festal hour !
When mirth o'erflows, then tremble !—'Twas a night
Of gorgeous revel, wreaths, and dance, and light,
When through the regal bower
The trumpet peal'd, ere yet the song was done,
And there were shrieks in golden Babylon,
And trampling armies, ruthless in their power.

The marble shrines were crown'd :
Young voices, through the blue Athenian sky,
And Dorian reeds, made summer-melody,
And censers waved around ;
And lyres were strung, and bright libations pour'd,
When, through the streets, flash'd out th' avenging sword,
Fearless and free, the sword with myrtles bound ! *

Through Rome a triumph pass'd.
Rich in her sun-god's mantling beams went by
That long array of glorious pageantry,
With shout and trumpet-blast.

* The sword of Harmodius.

An empire's gems their starry splendour shed
O'er the proud march ; a king in chains was led ;
A stately victor, crown'd and robed, came last.*

And many a Dryad's bower
Had lent the laurels, which, in waving play,
Stirr'd the warm air, and glisten'd round his way,
As a quick-flashing shower.
O'er his own porch, meantime, the cypress hung,
Through his fair halls a cry of anguish rung—
Woe for the dead !—the father's broken flower !

A sound of lyre and song,
In the still night, went floating o'er the Nile,
Whose waves, by many an old mysterious pile,
Swept with that voice along ;
And lamps were shining o'er the red wine's foam,
Where a chief revell'd in a monarch's dome,
And fresh rose garlands deck'd a glittering throng.

'Twas Antony that bade
The joyous chords ring out !—but strains arose
Of wilder omen at the banquet's close !
Sounds, by no mortal made,†
Shook Alexandria through her streets that night,
And pass'd—and with another sunset's light,
The kingly Roman on his bier was laid.

Bright midst its vineyards lay
The fair Campanian city,‡ with its towers
And temples gleaming through dark olive-bowers,
Clear in the golden day ;
Joy was around it as the glowing sky,
And crowds had fill'd its halls of revelry,
And all the sunny air was music's way.

A cloud came o'er the face
Of Italy's rich heaven !—Its crystal blue

* Paulus Æmilius, one of whose sons died a few days before, and another shortly after, his triumph on the conquest of Macedon, when Perseus, king of that country, was led in chains.

† See the description given by Plutarch, in his life of Antony, of the supernatural sounds heard in the streets of Alexandria, the night before Antony's death.

‡ Herculaneum, of which it is related, that all the inhabitants were assembled in the theatres, when the shower of ashes, which covered the city, descended.

Was changed, and deepen'd to a wrathful hue
Of night, o'ershadowing space,
As with the wings of death !—in all his power
Vesuvius woke, and hurl'd the burning shower,
And who could tell the buried city's place ?

Such things have been of yore,
In the gay regions where the citrons blow,
And purple summers all their sleepy glow
On the grape-clusters pour ;
And where the palms to spicy winds are waving,
Along clear seas of melted sapphire, laving,
As with a flow of light, their southern shore.

Turn we to other climes !
Far in the Druid-Isle a feast was spread,
Midst the rock-altars of the warrior-dead,*
And ancient battle-rhymes
Were chanted to the harp ; and yellow mead
Went flowing round, and tales of martial deed,
And lofty songs of Britain's elder time.

But ere the giant-fane
Cast its broad shadows on the robe of even,
Hush'd were the bards, and, in the face of Heaven,
O'er that old burial-plain
Flash'd the keen Saxon dagger !—Blood was streaming,
Where late the mead-cup to the sun was gleaming,
And Britain's hearths were heap'd that night in vain.

For they return'd no more !
They that went forth at morn, with reckless heart,
In that fierce banquet's mirth to bear their part ;
And, on the rushy floor,
And the bright spears and bucklers of the walls,
The high wood-fires were blazing in their halls ;
But not for them—they slept—their feast was o'er !

Fear ye the festal hour !
Aye, tremble when the cup of joy o'erflows !
Tame down the swelling heart !—the bridal rose,
And the rich myrtle's flower
Have veil'd the sword !—Red wines have sparkled fast
From venom'd goblets, and soft breezes pass'd,
With fatal perfume, through the revel's bower.

* Stonehenge, said by some traditions to have been erected to the memory of Ambrosius, an early British king ; and by others mentioned as a monumental record of the massacre of British chiefs here alluded to.

Twine the young glowing wreath !
 But pour not all your spirit in the song,
 Which through the sky's deep azure floats along,
 Like summer's quickening breath !
 The ground is hollow in the path of mirth,
 Oh ! far too daring seems the joy of earth,
 So darkly press'd and girdled in by death !

SONG OF THE BATTLE OF MORGARTEN.

"In the year 1315, Switzerland was invaded by Duke Leopold of Austria, with a formidable army. It is well attested, that this prince repeatedly declared he 'would trample the audacious rustics under his feet ;' and that he had procured a large stock of cordage, for the purpose of binding their chiefs, and putting them to death.

"The 15th of October, 1315, dawned. The sun darted its first rays on the shields and armour of the advancing host ; and this being the first army ever known to have attempted the frontiers of the cantons, the Swiss viewed its long line with various emotions. Montfort de Tettwang led the cavalry into the narrow pass, and soon filled the whole space between the mountain (Mount Sattel) and the lake. The fifty men on the eminence (above Morgarten) raised a sudden shout, and rolled down heaps of rocks and stones among the crowded ranks. The confederates on the mountain, perceiving the impression made by this attack, rushed down in close array, and fell upon the flank of the disordered column. With massy clubs they dashed in pieces the armour of the enemy, and dealt their blows and thrusts with long pikes. The narrowness of the defile admitted of no evolutions, and a slight frost having injured the road, the horses were impeded in all their motions ; many leaped into the lake ; all were startled ; and at last the whole column gave way, and fell suddenly back on the infantry ; and these last, as the nature of the country did not allow them to open their files, were run over by the fugitives, and many of them trampled to death. A general rout ensued, and Duke Leopold was, with much difficulty, rescued by a peasant, who led him to Winterthur, where the historian of the times saw him arrive in the evening, pale, sullen, and dismayed."—PLANTA'S *History of the Helvetic Confederacy*.

THE wine-month* shone in its golden prime,
 And the red grapes clustering hung,
 But a deeper sound, through the Switzer's clime,
 Than the vintage music, rung.

* *Wine-month*—the German name for October.

Song of the Battle of Morgarten.

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A sound, through vaulted cave,
A sound, through echoing glen,
Like the hollow swell of a rushing wave ;—
'Twas the tread of steel-girt men.

And a trumpet, pealing wild and far,
Midst the ancient rocks was blown,
Till the Alps replied to that voice of war,
With a thousand of their own.
And through the forest glooms
Flash'd helmets to the day,
And the winds were tossing knightly plumes,
Like the larch-boughs in their play.

In Hasli's * wilds there was gleaming steel,
As the host of the Austrian pass'd ;
And the Schreckhorn's † rocks, with a savage peal,
Made mirth of his clarion's blast.
Up midst the Righi ‡ snows
The stormy march was heard,
With the charger's tramp, whence fire-sparks rose,
And the leader's gathering word.

But a band, the noblest band of all,
Through the rude Morgarten strait,
With blazon'd streamers, and lances tall,
Moved onwards, in princely state.
They came, with heavy chains,
For the race despised so long—
But amidst his Alp-domains,
The herdsman's arm is strong !

The sun was reddening the clouds of morn
When they enter'd the rock-defile,
And shrill as a joyous hunter's horn
Their bugles rung the while.
But on the misty height,
Where the mountain-people stood,
There was stillness, as of night,
When storms at distance brood.

* Hasli, a wild district in the canton of Berne.

† Schreckhorn, *the peak of terror*, a mountain in the canton of Berne.

‡ Righi, a mountain in the canton of Schwytz.

Song of the Battle of Morgarten.

There was stillness, as of deep dead night,
And a pause—but not of fear,
While the Switzers gaz'd on the gathering might
Of the hostile shield and spear.
On wound those columns bright
Between the lake and wood,
But they look'd not to the misty height
Where the mountain-people stood.

The pass was fill'd with their serried power,
All helm'd and maji-array'd,
And their steps had sounds like a thunder-shower
In the rustling forest shade.
There were prince and crested knight,
Hemm'd in by cliff and flood,
When a shout arose from the misty height
Where the mountain-people stood.

And the mighty rocks came bounding down,
Their startled foes among,
With a joyous whirl from the summit thrown—
Oh ! the herdsman's arm is strong !
They came, like lawine* hurl'd
From Alp to Alp in play,
When the echoes shout through the snowy world,
And the pines are borne away.

The fir-woods crash'd on the mountain-side,
And the Switzers rush'd from high,
With a sudden charge, on the flower and pride
Of the Austrian chivalry :
Like hunters of the deer,
They storm'd the narrow dell,
And first in the shock, with Uri's spear,
Was the arm of William Tell.†

There was tumult in the crowded strait,
And a cry of wild dismay,
And many a warrior met his fate
From a peasant's hand that day !

* *Lawvine*, the Swiss name for the avalanche.

† William Tell's name is particularly mentioned amongst the confederates at Morgarten.

Song of the Battle of Morgarten.

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And the empire's banner then,
From its place of waving free,
Went down before the shepherd-men,
The men of the Forest-sea.*

With their pikes and massy clubs they brake
The cuirass and the shield,
And the war-horse dash'd to the reddening lake,
From the reapers of the field !
The field—but not of sheaves—
Proud crests and pennons lay,
Strewn o'er it thick as the birch-wood leaves,
In the autumn tempest's way.

Oh ! the sun in heaven fierce havoc view'd,
When the Austrian turn'd to fly,
And the brave, in the trampling multitude,
Had a fearful death to die !
And the leader of the war
At eve unhelm'd was seen,
With a hurrying step on the wilds afar,
And a pale and troubled mien,

But the sons of the land which the freeman tills,
Went back from the battle-toil,
To their cabin homes midst the deep green hills,
All burden'd with royal spoil.
There were songs and festal fires
On the soaring Alps that night,
When children sprung to greet their sires,
From the wild Morgarten fight.

* *Forest-sea*, the lake of the four cantons is also so called.

CHORUS.

TRANSLATED FROM MANZONI'S "CONTE DI CARMOGNOLA."

HARK ! from the right bursts forth a trumpet's sound !
 A loud shrill trumpet from the left replies !
 On every side, hoarse echoes from the ground,
 To the quick tramp of steeds and warriors rise,
 Hollow and deep :—and banners all around,
 Meet hostile banners waving through the skies.
 Here steel-clad bands in marshall'd order shine,
 And there a host confronts their glittering line.

Lo ! half the field, already from the sight
 Hath vanish'd, hid by closing groups of foes !
 Swords crossing swords, flash lightning o'er the fight,
 And the strife deepens, and the life-blood flows !—
 Oh ! who are these ?—What stranger in his might
 Comes bursting on the lovely land's repose ?
 What patriot hearts have nobly vow'd to save
 Their native soil, and make its dust their grave ?

One race, alas ! these foes, one kindred race,
 Were born and rear'd the same bright scenes among !
 The stranger calls them brothers—and each face
 That brotherhood reveals ;—one common tongue
 Dwells on their lips ;—the earth on which ye trace
 Their heart's blood, is the soil from whence they sprung.
 One mother gave them birth—this chosen land,
 Girdled with Alps and seas, by Nature's guardian hand.

Oh, grief and horror !—Who the first could dare
 Against a brother's breast the sword to wield ?
 What cause unhallow'd and accursed, declare !
 Hath bathed with carnage this ignoble field ?—
 Think'st thou they know ?—they but inflict and share
 Misery and death, the motive unreveal'd !
 Sold to a leader, sold *himself* to die,
 With him they strive, they fall—and ask not why.

But are there none who love them !—Have they none,
 No wives, no mothers, who might rush between,
 And win with tears the husband and the son,
 Back to their homes from this polluted scene ?

And they, whose hearts, when life's bright day is done,
Unfold to thoughts more solemn and serene,
Thoughts of the tomb ; why cannot *they* assuage
The storms of passion with the voice of age ?

Ask not !—the peasant at his cabin-door
Sits, calmly pointing to the distant cloud
Which skirts th' horizon, menacing to pour
Destruction down, o'er fields he hath not plough'd.
Thus, where no echo of the battle's roar
Is heard afar, e'en thus the reckless crowd,
In tranquil safety number o'er the slain,
Or tell of cities burning on the plain.

There mayst thou mark the boy, with earnest gaze,
Fix'd on his mother's lips, intent to know,
By names of insult, those, whom future days
Shall see him meet in arms, their deadliest foe !
There proudly many a glittering dame displays
Bracelet and zone, with radiant gems that glow,
By husbands, lovers, home in triumph borne,
From the sad brides of fallen warriors torn.

Woe to the victors and the vanquish'd ! Woe !
The earth is heap'd, is loaded with the slain,
Loud and more loud the cries of fury grow,
A sea of blood is swelling o'er the plain !
But from th' embattled front already, lo !
A band recedes—it flies—all hope is vain,
And venal hearts, despairing of the strife,
Wake to the love, the clinging love of life.

As the light grain disperses in the air,
Borne from the winnowing by the gales around,
Thus fly the vanquish'd, in their wild despair,
Chased—sever'd—scatter'd—o'er the ample ground.
But mightier bands, that lay in ambush there,
Burst on their flight—and hark ! the deepening sound
Of fierce pursuit !—still nearer and more near,
The rush of war-steeds trampling in the rear !

The day is won !—they fall—disarm'd they yield,
Low at the conqueror's feet all suppliant lying !
Midst shouts of victory pealing o'er the field,
Oh ! who may hear the murmurs of the dying ?—

Haste ! let the tale of triumph be reveal'd !
E'en now the courier to his steed is flying,
He spurs—he speeds—with tidings of the day,
To rouse up cities in his lightning way.

Why pour ye thus from your deserted homes,
Oh, eager multitudes ! around him pressing ?
Each hurrying where his breathless courser foams,
Each tongue, each eye, infatuate hope confessing !
Know ye not *whence* th' ill omen'd herald comes,
And dare ye dream he comes with words of blessing ? —
Brothers, by brothers slain, lie low and cold—
Be ye content !—the glorious tale is told.

I hear the voice of joy, th' exulting cry !
They deck the shrine, they swell the choral strains ;
E'en now the homicides assail the sky
With pæans, which indignant Heaven disdains !
But, from the soaring Alps, the stranger's eye
Looks watchful down on our ensanguin'd plains,
And with the cruel rapture of a foe,
Numbers the mighty, stretch'd in death below.

Haste ! form your lines again, ye brave and true !
Haste, haste ! your triumphs and your joys suspending !
Th' invader comes ; your banners raise anew,
Rush to the strife, your country's cause defending !
Victors ! why pause ye ?—Are ye weak and few ?
Aye, such he deem'd you ! and for *this* descending,
He waits you on the field ye know too well,
The same red war-field where your brethren fell.

Oh ! thou devoted land ! that canst not rear
In peace thine offspring ; thou, the lost and won,
The fair and fatal soil, that dost appear
Too narrow still for each contending son ;
Receive the stranger, in his fierce career,
Parting thy spoils !—thy chastening is begun !
And, wresting from thy chiefs the guardian sword,
Foes, whom thou ne'er hadst wrong'd, sit proudly at thy
board.

Are these infatuate too ? Oh ! who hath known
A people e'er by guilt's vain triumph blest ?
The wrong'd, the vanquish'd, suffer not alone,
Brief is the joy that swells th' oppressor's breast.

What though not yet his day of pride be flown,
Though yet Heaven's vengeance spare his towering crest,
Well hath it mark'd him—and ordain'd the hour
When his last sigh shall own its mightier power.

Are we not creatures of one hand divine,
Form'd in one mould, to one redemption born,
Kindred alike, where'er our skies may shine,
Where'er our sight first drank the vital morn ?
Brothers ! one bond around our souls should twine,
And woe to him by whom that bond is torn !
Who mounts by trampling broken hearts to earth,
Who bears down spirits of immortal birth !

ENGLAND'S DEAD.

SON of the ocean isle !
Where sleep your mighty dead ?
Show me what high and stately pile
Is rear'd o'er Glory's bed.

Go, stranger ! track the deep,
Free, free, the white sail spread !
Wave may not foam, nor wild wind sweep,
Where rest not England's dead.

On Egypt's burning plains,
By the pyramid o'ersway'd,
With fearful power the noon-day reigns,
And the palm-trees yield no shade.

But let the angry sun
From Heaven look fiercely red,
Unfelt by those whose task is done !
There slumber England's dead.

The hurricane hath might
Along the Indian shore,
And far, by Ganges' banks at night,
Is heard the tiger's roar.

England's Dead.

But let the sound roll on !
It hath no tone of dread,
For those that from their toils are gone ;—
There slumber England's dead !

Loud rush the torrent-floods
The western wilds among,
And free, in green Columbia's woods,
The hunter's bow is strung.

But let the floods rush on !
Let the arrow's flight be sped !
Why should *they* reck whose task is done ?
There slumber England's dead !

The mountain-storms rise high
In the snowy Pyrenees,
And toss the pine-boughs through the sky,
Like rose-leaves on the breeze.

But let the storm rage on !
Let the forest-wreaths be shed .
For the Roncesvalles' field is won,—
There slumber England's dead.

On the frozen deep's repose
'Tis a dark and dreadful hour,
When round the ship the ice-fields close,
To chain her with their power.

But let the ice drift on !
Let the cold-blue desert spread !
Their course with mast and flag is done,
There slumber England's dead.

The warlike of the isles,
The men of field and wave !
Are not the rocks their funeral piles,
The seas and shores their grave ?

Go, stranger ! track the deep,
Free, free the white sail spread !
Wave may not foam, nor wild wind sweep,
Where rest not England's dead.

THE MEETING OF THE BARDS.

WRITTEN FOR AN EISTEDDVOD, OR MEETING OF
WELSH BARDS.

Held in London, May 22nd, 1822.

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THE *Gorseddau*, or meetings of the British bards, were anciently ordained to be held in the open air, on some conspicuous situation, whilst the sun was above the horizon; or, according to the expression employed on these occasions, "in the face of the sun, and in the eye of light." The places set apart for this purpose were marked out by a circle of stones, called the circle of federation. The presiding bard stood on a large stone (Maen Gorsedd, or the stone of assembly), in the centre. The sheathing of a sword upon this stone was the ceremony which announced the opening of a *Gorsedd*, or meeting. The bards always stood in their uni-coloured robes, with their heads and feet uncovered, within the circle of federation.—See OWEN'S *Translation of the Heroic Elegies of Llywarc Hen*.

WHERE met our bards of old?—the glorious throng,
They of the mountain and the battle-song?
They met—oh! not in kingly hall or bower,
But where wild Nature girt herself with power:
They met—where streams flash'd bright from rocky caves,
They met—where woods made moan o'er warriors' graves,
And where the torrent's rainbow spray was cast,
And where dark lakes were heaving to the blast,
And midst th' eternal cliffs, whose strength defied
The crested Roman in his hour of pride;
And where the Carnedd,* on its lonely hill,
Bore silent record of the mighty still;
And where the Druid's ancient Cromlech† frown'd,
And the oaks breathed mysterious murmurs round:—
There throng'd th' inspired of yore!—on plain or height,
In the sun's face, beneath the eye of light,
And, baring unto heaven each noble head,
Stood in the circle, where none else might tread.
Well might their lays be lofty!—soaring thought
From Nature's presence tenfold grander caught:

* *Carnedd*, a stone-barrow, or cairn.

† *Cromlech*, a Druidical monument, or altar. The word means a stone of covenant.

Well might bold Freedom's soul pervade the strains,
Which startled eagles from their lone domains,
And, like a breeze, in chainless triumph, went
Up through the blue resounding firmament !

Whence came the echoes to those numbers high ?—
'Twas from the battle-fields of days gone by !
And from the tombs of heroes, laid to rest
With their good swords, upon the mountain's breast ;
And from the watch-towers on the heights of snow,
Sever'd, by cloud and storm, from all below ;
And the turf-mounds,* once girt by ruddy spears,
And the rock-altars of departed years.

Thence, deeply mingling with the torrent's roar,
The winds a thousand wild responses bore ;
And the green laud, whose every vale and glen
Doth shrine the memory of heroic men,
On all her hills, awakening to rejoice,
Sent forth proud answers to her children's voice.
For us, not ours the festival to hold,
Midst the stone-circles, hallow'd thus of old ;
Not where great Nature's majesty and might
First broke, all-glorious, on our infant sight ;
Not near the tombs, where sleep our free and brave,
Not by the mountain-llyn,† the ocean wave,
In these late days we meet !—dark Mona's shore,
Eryri's ‡ cliffs resound with harps no more !

But, as the stream (though time or art may turn
The current, bursting from its cavern'd urn,
To bathe soft vales of pasture and of flowers,
From Alpine glens, or ancient forest-bowers),
Alike, in rushing strength or sunny sleep,
Holds on its course, to mingle with the deep ;
Thus, though our paths be changed, still warm and free,
Land of the bard ! our spirit flies to thee !
To thee our thoughts, our hopes, our hearts belong,
Our dreams are haunted by thy voice of song !
Nor yield our souls one patriot-feeling less,
To the green memory of thy loveliness,
Than theirs, whose harp-notes peal'd from every height,
In the sun's face, beneath the eye of light !

* The ancient British chiefs frequently harangued their followers from small artificial mounds of turf.—See *Pennant*.

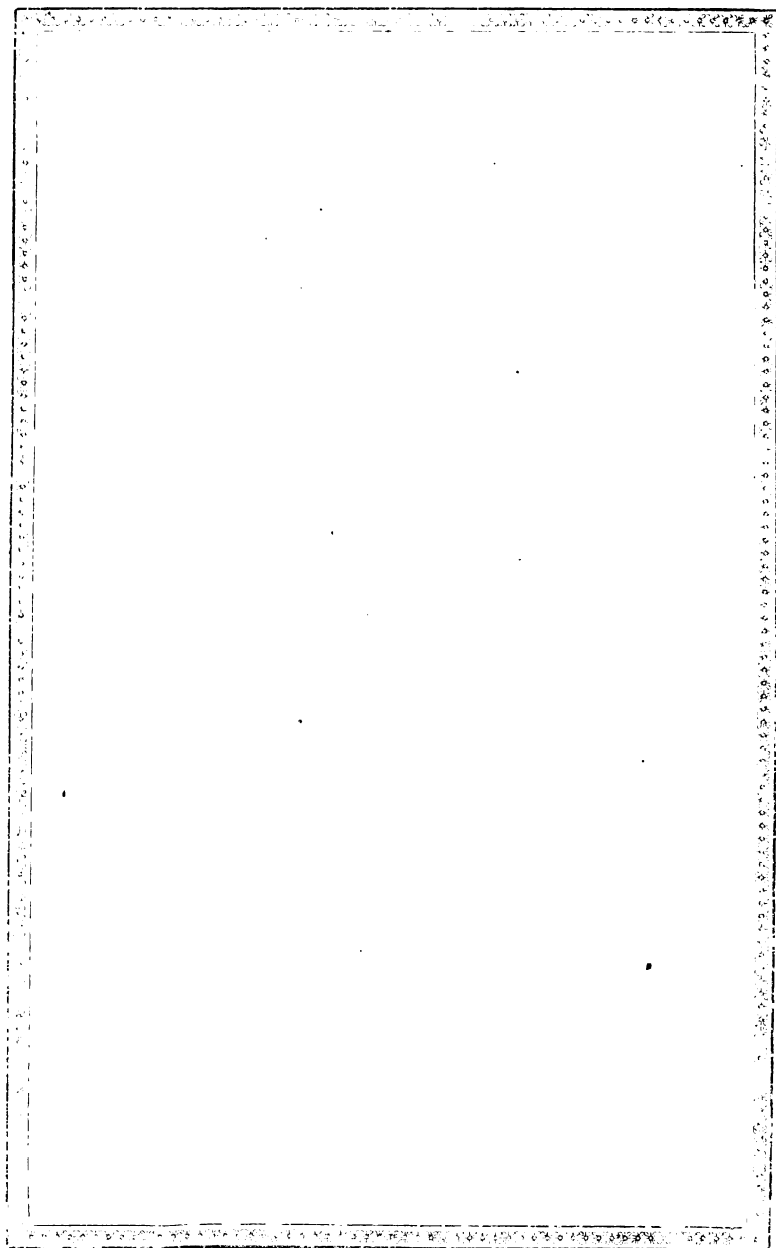
† *Llyn*, a lake or pool.

‡ *Eryri*, Snowdon.



“The bard hath gifts of prophecy from death.”

[p. 203.]



THE VOICE OF SPRING.

I COME, I come ! ye have call'd me long,
I come o'er the mountains with light and song !
Ye may trace my step o'er the wakening earth,
By the winds which tell of the violet's birth,
By the primrose-stars, in the shadowy grass,
By the green leaves, opening as I pass.

I have breathed on the south, and the chestnut flowers
By thousands have burst from the forest-bowers,
And the ancient graves, and the fallen fanes,
Are veil'd with wreaths on Italian plains ;—
But it is not for me, in my hour of bloom,
To speak of the ruin or the tomb !

I have look'd o'er the hills of the stormy north,
And the larch has hung all his tassels forth,
The fisher is out on the sunny sea,
And the rein-deer bounds o'er the pastures free,
And the pine has a fringe of softer green,
And the moss looks bright, where my foot hath been.

I have sent through the wood-paths a glowing sigh,
And call'd out each voice of the deep blue sky ;
From the night-bird's lay through the starry time,
In the groves of the soft Hesperian clime,
To the swan's wild note, by the Iceland lakes,
When the dark fir-branch into verdure breaks.

From the streams and founts I have loosed the chain,
They are sweeping on to the silvery main,
They are flashing down from the mountain-brows,
They are flinging spray o'er the forest-boughs,
They are bursting fresh from their sparry caves,
And the earth resounds with the joy of waves !

Come forth, O ye children of gladness, come !
Where the violets lie may be now your home.
Ye of the rose-lip and dew-bright eye,
And the bounding footstep, to meet me fly !
With the lyre, and the wreath, and the joyous lay.
Come forth to the sunshine, I may not stay.

N

Away from the dwellings of care-worn men,
The waters are sparkling in grove and glen !
Away from the chamber and sullen hearth,
The young leaves are dancing in breezy mirth !
Their light stems thrill to the wild-wood strains,
And youth is abroad in my green domains.

But ye !—ye are changed since ye met me last !
There is something bright from your features pass'd !
There is that come over your brow and eye,
Which speaks of a world where the flowers must die !—
Ye smile ! but your smile hath a dimness yet—
Oh ! what have ye look'd on since last we met ?

Ye are changed, ye are changed !—and I see not here
All whom I saw in the vanish'd year !
There were graceful heads, with their ringlets bright,
Which toss'd in the breeze with a play of light ;
There were eyes, in whose glistening laughter lay
No faint remembrance of dull decay !

There were steps that flow o'er the cowslip's head,
As if for a banquet all earth were spread ;
There were voices that rung through the sapphire sky,
And had not a sound of mortality !
Are they gone ? is their mirth from the mountains pass'd ?—
Ye have look'd on death since ye met me last !

I know whence the shadow comes o'er you now
Ye have strewn the dust on the sunny brow !
Ye have given the lovely to earth's embrace,
She hath taken the fairest of beauty's race,
With their laughing eyes and their festal crown,
They are gone from amongst you in silence down !

They are gone from amongst you, the young and fair,
Ye have lost the gleam of their shining hair !—
But I know of a land where there falls no blight,
I shall find them there, with their eyes of light !
Where Death midst the blooms of the morn may dwell,
I tarry no longer—farewell, farewell !

The summer is coming, on soft winds borne,
Ye may press the grape, ye may bind the corn !
For me, I depart to a brighter shore,
Ye are mark'd by care, ye are mine no more.
I go where the loved who have left you dwell,
And the flowers are not death's—fare ye well, farewell !

THE LEAGUE OF THE ALPS;

OR,

THE MEETING ON THE FIELD OF GRÜTLI.

ADVERTISEMENT.

It was in the year 1308, that the Swiss rose against the tyranny of the Bailiffs appointed over them by Albert of Austria. The field called the Grütli, at the foot of the Seelisberg, and near the boundaries of Uri and Unterwalden, was fixed upon by three spirited yeomen, Walter Fürst (the father-in-law of William Tell), Werner Stauffacher, and Erni (or Arnold) Melchthal, as their place of meeting, to deliberate on the accomplishment of their projects.

"Hither came Fürst and Melchthal, along secret paths over the heights, and Stauffacher in his boat across the Lake of the Four Cantons. On the night preceding the 11th of November, 1307, they met here, each with ten associates, men of approved worth; and while at this solemn hour they were wrapt in the contemplation that on their success depended the fate of their whole posterity, Werner, Walter, and Arnold held up their hands to heaven, and in the name of the Almighty, who has created man to an inalienable degree of freedom, swore jointly and strenuously to defend that freedom. The thirty associates heard the oath with awe; and with uplifted hands attested the same God, and all his saints, that they were firmly bent on offering up their lives for the defence of their injured liberty. They then calmly agreed on their future proceedings, and for the present, each returned to his hamlet."—PLANTA'S *History of the Helvetic Confederacy*.

On the first day of the year 1308, they succeeded in throwing off the Austrian yoke, and "it is well attested," says the same author, "that not one drop of blood was shed on this memorable occasion, nor had one proprietor to lament the loss of a claim, a privilege, or an inch of land. The Swiss met on the succeeding sabbath, and once more confirmed by oath their ancient, and (as they fondly named it) their perpetual league."



THE LEAGUE OF THE ALPS.

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I.

'Twas night upon the Alps.—The Senn's' wild horn,
Like a wind's voice, had pour'd its last long tone,
Whose pealing echoes, through the larch-woods borne,
To the low cabins of the glens made known
That welcome steps were nigh. The flocks had gone,
By cliff and pine-bridge, to their place of rest ;
The chamois slumber'd, for the chase was done ;
His cavern-bed of moss the hunter prest,
And the rock-eagle couch'd, high on his cloudy nest.

II.

Did the land sleep?—the woodman's axe had ceas'd
Its ringing notes upon the beech and plane ;
The grapes were gathered in ; the vintage feast
Was clos'd upon the hills, the reaper's strain
Hushed by the streams ; the year was in its wane,
The night in its mid-watch ; it was a time
E'en marked and hallowed unto Slumber's reign.
But thoughts were stirring, restless and sublime,
And o'er his white Alps moved the Spirit of the clime.

III.

For there, where snows, in crowning glory spread,
 High and unmark'd by mortal footstep lay ;
 And there, where torrents, 'midst the ice-caves fed,
 Burst in their joy of light and sound away ;
 And there, where Freedom, as in scornful play,
 Had hung man's dwellings 'midst the realms of air,
 O'er cliffs, the very birth-place of the day—
 Oh ! who would dream that Tyranny could dare
 To lay her withering hand on God's bright works e'en there

IV.

Yet thus it was—amidst the fleet streams gushing
 To bring down rainbows o'er their sparry cell,
 And the glad heights, through mist and tempest rushing
 Up where the sun's red fire-glance earliest fell,
 And the fresh pastures, where the herd's sweet bell
 Recall'd such life as Eastern patriarchs led ;—
There peasant-men their free thoughts might not tell
 Save in the hour of shadows and of dread,
 And hollow sounds that wake to Guilt's dull, stealthy tread.

V.

But in a land of happy shepherd-homes,
 On its green hills in quiet joy reclining,
 With their bright hearth-fires, 'midst the twilight glooms,
 From bowery lattice through the fir-woods shining ;
 A land of legends and wild songs, entwining
 Their memory with all memories lov'd and blest—
 In such a land there dwells a power, combining
 The strength of many a calm, but fearless breast !—
 And woe to him who breaks the sabbath of its rest !

VI.

A sound went up—the wave's dark sleep was broken—
 On Uri's lake was heard a midnight oar—
 Of man's brief course a troubled moment's token
 Th' eternal waters to their barriers bore ;
 And then their gloom a flashing image wore
 Of torch-fires streaming out o'er crag and wood,
 And the wild falcon's wing was heard to soar
 In startled haste—and by that moonlight-flood,
 A band of patriot men on Grütli's verdure stood

VII.

They stood in arms—the wolf-spear and the bow
Had waged their war on things of mountain-race ;
Might not their swift stroke reach a mail-clad foe ?—
Strong hands in harvest, daring feet in chase,
True hearts in fight, were gather'd on that place .
Of secret council.—Not for fame or spoil
So met those men in Heaven's majestic face ;—
To guard free hearths they rose, the sons of toil,
The hunter of the rocks, the tiller of the soil.

VIII.

O'er their low pastoral valleys might the tide
Of years have flow'd, and still, from sire to son,
Their names and records on the green earth died,
As cottage-lamps, expiring, one by one,
In the dim glades, when midnight hath begun
To hush all sound.—But silent on its height,
The snow-mass, full of death, while ages run
Their course, may slumber, bath'd in rosy light,
Till some rash voice or step disturb its brooding might.

IX.

So were *they* roused—th' invading step had past
Their cabin-thresholds, and the lowly door,
Which well had stood against the Föhnwind's^a blast,
Could bar Oppression from their homes no more. —
Why, what had *she* to do where all things wore
Wild Grandeur's impress ?—In the storm's free way,
How dared *she* lift her pageant crest before
Th' enduring and magnificent array
Of sovereign Alps, that wing'd their eagles with the day ?

X.

This might not long be borne—the tameless hills
Have voices from the cave and cataract swelling,
Fraught with His name, whose awful presence fills
Their deep lone places, and for ever telling
That He hath made man free !—and they whose dwelling
Was in those ancient fastnesses, gave ear ;
The weight of sufferance from their hearts repelling,
They rose—the forester, the mountaineer—
Oh ! what hath earth more strong than the good peasant-spear ?

XI.

Sacred be Grütli's field !—their vigil keeping
Through many a blue and starry summer-night,
There, while the sons of happier lands were sleeping,
Had those brave Switzers met ; and in the sight
Of the just God, who pours forth burning might
To gird the oppress'd, had given their deep thoughts way
And braced their spirits for the patriot-fight,
With lovely images of homes, that lay
Bower'd 'midst the rustling pines, or by the torrent-spray.

XII.

Now had endurance reach'd its bounds !—They came
With courage set in each bright, earnest eye,
The day, the signal, and the hour to name,
When they should gather on their hills to die,
Or shake the Glaciers with their joyous cry
For the land's freedom.—'Twas a scene, combining
All glory in itself—the solemn sky,
The stars, the waves their soften'd light enshrining,
And Man's high soul supreme o'er mighty Nature shining.

XIII.

Calmly they stood, and with collected mien,
Breathing their souls in voices firm but low,
As if the spirit of the hour and scene,
With the wood's whisper, and the wave's sweet flow,
Had temper'd in their thoughtful hearts the glow
Of all indignant feeling. To the breath
Of Dorian flute, and lyre-note soft and slow,
E'en thus, of old, the Spartan from its sheath
Drew his devoted sword, and girt himself for death.

XIV.

And three, that seemed as chieftains of the band,
Were gather'd in the midst on that lone shore
By Uri's lake—a father of the land,^a
One on his brow the silent record wore,
Of many days whose shadows had pass'd o'er
His path amongst the hills, and quench'd the dreams
Of youth with sorrow.—Yet from memory's lore
Still his life's evening drew its loveliest gleams,
For he had walk'd with God, beside the mountain streams.

XV.

And his grey hairs, in happier times, might well
To their last pillow silently have gone,
As melts a wreath of snow.—But who shall tell
How life may task the spirit?—He was one,
Who from its morn a freeman's work had done,
And reap'd his harvest, and his vintage press'd,
Fearless of wrong ;—and now, at set of sun,
He bow'd not to his years, for on the breast
Of a still chainless land, he deem'd it much to rest.

XVI.

But for such holy rest strong hands must toil,
Strong hearts endure !—By that pale elder's side,
Stood one that seem'd a monarch of the soil,
Serene and stately in his manhood's pride,
Werner,⁴ the brave and true !—If men have died,
Their hearths and shrines inviolate to keep,
He was a mate for such.—The voice, that cried
Within his breast, "Arise !" came still and deep
From his far home, that smil'd, e'en then, in moonlight sleep.

XVII.

It was a home to die for !—as it rose,
Through its vine-foliage sending forth a sound
Of mirthful childhood, o'er the green repose
And laughing sunshine of the pastures round ;
And he whose life to that sweet spot was bound,
Rais'd unto Heaven a glad, yet thoughtful eye,
And set his free step firmer on the ground,
When o'er his soul its melodies went by,
As through some Alpine pass, a breeze of Italy.

XVIII.

But who was he, that on his hunting-spear
Lean'd with a prouder and more fiery bearing?—
His was a brow for tyrant-hearts to fear,
Within the shadow of its dark locks wearing
That which they may not tame—a soul declaring
War against earth's oppressors.—'Midst that throng,
Of other mould he seem'd, and loftier daring,—
One whose blood swept high impulses along,—
One that should pass, and leave a name for warlike song,

XIX.

A memory on the mountains !—one to stand,
When the hills echoed with the deepening swell
Of hostile trumpets, foremost for the land,
And in some rock-defile, or savage dell,
Array her peasant children to repel
Th' invader, sending arrows for his chains !
Ay, one to fold around him, as he fell,
Her banner with a smile—for through his veins
The joy of danger flow'd, as torrents to the plains.

XX.

There was at times a wildness in the light
Of his quick-flashing eye ; a something, born
Of the free Alps, and beautifully bright,
And proud, and tameless, laughing Fear to scorn !
It well might be !—Young Erni's⁵ step had worn
The mantling snows on their most regal steeps,
And track'd the lynx above the clouds of morn,
And follow'd where the flying chamois leaps
Across the dark-blue rifts, th' unafthom'd glacier-deeps.

XXI.

He was a creature of the Alpine sky,
A being, whose bright spirit had been fed
Midst the crown'd heights with joy and liberty,
And thoughts of power.—He knew each path which led
To the rock's treasure-caves, whose crystals shed
Soft light o'er secret fountains.—At the tone
Of his loud horn, the Lämmer-Geyer⁶ had spread
A startled wing ; for oft that peal had blown
Where the free cataract's voice was wont to sound alone.

XXII.

His step had track'd the waste, his soul had stirr'd
The ancient solitudes—his voice had told
Of wrongs to call down Heaven.⁷—That tale was heard
In Hasli's dales, and where the shepherds fold
Their flocks in dark ravine and craggy hold
On the bleak Oberland ; and where the light
Of Day's last footstep bathes in burning gold
Great Righi's cliffs ; and where Mount Pilate's height
Casts o'er his glassy lake the darkness of his might.

XXIII.

Nor was it heard in vain.—There all things press
High thoughts on man.—The fearless hunter pass'd,
And, from the bosom of the wilderness,
There leapt a spirit and a power to cast
The weight of bondage down—and bright and fast,
As the clear waters, joyously and free,
Burst from the desert-rock, it rush'd, at last,
Through the far valleys ; till the patriot-three
Thus with their brethren stood, beside the Forest Sea. *

XXIV.

They link'd their hands,—they pledged their stainless faith,
In the dread presence of attesting Heaven—
They bound their hearts to suffering and to death,
With the severe and solemn transport given
To bless such vows.—How man had striven,
How man *might* strive, and vainly strive, they knew,
And call'd upon their God, whose arm had riven
The crest of many a tyrant, since He blew
The foaming sea-wave on, and Egypt's might o'erthrew.

XXV.

They knelt, and rose in strength.—The valleys lay
Still in the dimness, but the peaks which darted
Into the bright mid-air, had caught from day
A flush of fire, when those true Switzers parted,
Each to his glen or forest, stedfast-hearted,
And full of hope. Not many suns had worn
Their setting glory, ere from slumber started
Ten thousand voices, of the mountains born—
So far was heard the blast of Freedom's echoing horn !

XXVI.

The ice-vaults trembled, when that peal came rending
The frozen stillness which around them hung ;
From cliff to cliff the avalanche descending,
Gave answer, till the sky's blue hollows rung ;
And the flame-signals through the midnight sprung,
From the Surennen rocks like banners streaming
To the far Seelisberg ; whence light was flung
On Grütli's field, till all the red lake gleaming
Shone out, a meteor-heaven in its wild splendour seeming.

XXVII.

And the winds toss'd each summit's blazing crest,
As a host's plumage ; and the giant pines,
Fell'd where they wav'd o'er crag and eagle's nest,
Heap'd up the flames. The clouds grew fiery signs,
As o'er a city's burning towers and shrines,
Reddening the distance. Wine-cups, crown'd and bright,
In Werner's dwelling flow'd ; through leafless vines
From Walter's hearth stream'd forth the festive light,
And Erni's blind old sire gave thanks to Heaven that night.

XXVIII.

Then, on the silence of the snows there lay
A Sabbath's quiet sunshine,—and its bell
Fill'd the hush'd air awhile, with lonely sway ;
For the stream's voice was chain'd by Winter's spell,
The deep wood-sounds had ceas'd.—But rock and dell
Rung forth, ere long, when strains of jubilee
Peal'd from the mountain-churches, with a swell
Of praise to Him who stills the raging sea,—
For now the strife was clos'd, the glorious Alps were free!

NOTES.

NOTE 1.

——— *The Senn's wild horn.*

SENN, the name given to a herdsman among the Swiss Alps.

NOTE 2.

——— *Against the Föhnwind's blast.*

Föhnwind, the South-east wind, which frequently lays waste the country before it.

NOTE 3.

——— *A father of the land.*

Walter Fürst, the father-in-law of Tell.

NOTE 4.

——— *Werner, the brave and true! &c.*

Werner Stauffacher, who had been urged by his wife to rouse and unite his countrymen for the deliverance of Switzerland.

NOTE 5.

——— *Young Erni's step had worn, &c.*

Erni, Arnold Melchthal.

NOTE 6.

——— *The Lämmer-Geyer had spread, &c.*

The Lämmer-Geyer, the largest kind of Alpine eagle.

NOTE 7.

Of wrongs to call down Heaven, &c.

The eyes of his aged father had been put out, by the orders of the Austrian Governor.

NOTE 8.

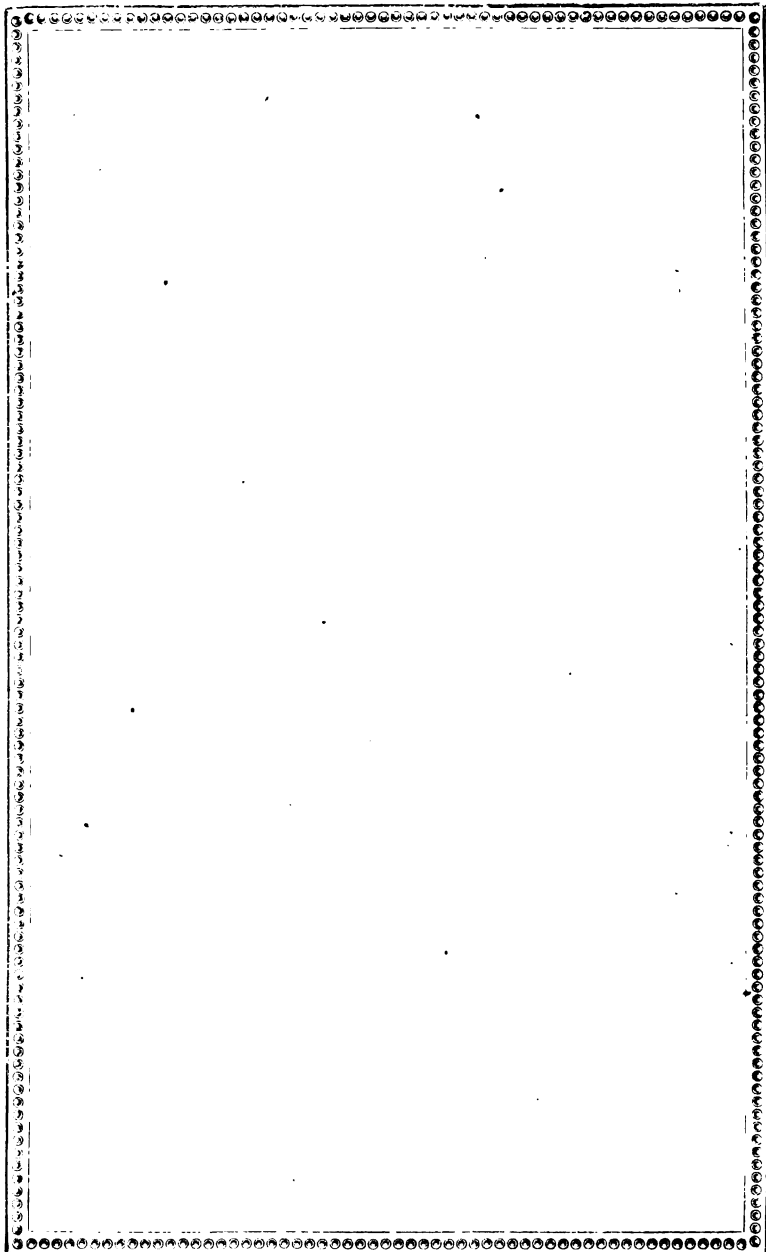
——— *Beside the Forest-Sea.*

Forest-Sea. The Lake of the Four Cantons is frequently so called.



"There's a spring in the woods by my sunny home."

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MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.



THE LANDING OF THE PILGRIM FATHERS.

THE breaking waves dash'd high
On a stern and rock-bound coast,
And the woods, against a stormy sky,
Their giant branches tost :

And the heavy night hung dark
The hills and water o'er,
When a band of exiles moor'd their bark
On the wild New England shore.

Not as the conqueror comes,
They, the true-hearted came,
Not with the roll of the stirring drums,
And the trumpet that sings of fame ;

Not as the flying come,
In silence and in fear, —
They shook the depths of the desert's gloom,
With their hymns of lofty cheer.

Amidst the storm they sang,
And the stars heard and the sea !
And the sounding aisles of the dim woods rang
To the anthem of the free.

The ocean-eagle soar'd
From his nest by the white wave's foam,
And the rocking pines of the forest roar'd—
This was their welcome home!

There were men with hoary hair,
Amidst that pilgrim-band—
Why had they come to wither there
Away from their childhood's land?

There was woman's fearless eye,
Lit by her deep love's truth;
There was manhood's brow serenely high,
And the fiery heart of youth.

What sought they thus afar?
Bright jewels of the mine?
The wealth of seas, the spoils of war?—
They sought a faith's pure shrine!

Ay, call it holy ground,
The soil where first they trod!
They have left unstain'd what there they found—
Freedom to worship God!

THE CHILD AND DOVE.

SUGGESTED BY CHANTREY'S STATUE OF LADY LOUISA RUSSELL.

THOU art a thing on our dreams to rise,
'Midst the echoes of long-lost melodies,
And to fling bright dew from the morning back,
Fair form! on each image of childhood's track.

Thou art a thing to recall the hours,
When the love of our souls was on leaves and flowers,
When a world was our own in some dim sweet grove,
And treasure untold in one captive dove.

Are they gone?—can we think it, while *thou* are there,
Thou joyous child with the clustering hair?
Is it not Spring that indeed breathes free
And fresh o'er each thought, while we gaze on thee?

No ! never more may we smile as *thou*
Sheddest round smiles from thy sunny brow ;
Yet something it is, in our hearts to shrine
A memory of beauty undimm'd as thine.

To have met the joy of thy speaking face,
To have felt the spell of thy breezy grace,
To have linger'd before thee, and turn'd, and borne
One vision away of the cloudless morn.

THE CHILD'S LAST SLEEP.

ON A MONUMENT BY CHANTREY FOR AN INFANT DAUGHTER
OF SIR THOMAS ACKLAND.

THOU sleepest—but when wilt thou wake, fair child ?
—When the fawn awakes 'midst the fore st wild ?
When the lark's wing mounts with the breeze of morn,
When the first rich breath of the rose is born ?
—Lovely thou sleepest, yet something lies
Too deep and still on thy soft-seal'd eyes ;
Mournful though sweet, is thy rest to see—
When will the hour of thy rising be ?

Not when the fawn wakes, not when the lark
On the crimson cloud of the morn floats dark—
Grief, with vain passionate tears, hath wet
The hair shedding gleams from thy pale brow yet ;
Love with sad kisses unfelt hath prest
Thy meek dropt eyelids and quiet breast ;
And the glad Spring, calling out bird and bee,
Shall colour all blossoms, fair child, but thee.

Thou'rt gone from us, bright one—that thou shouldst die,
And life be left to the butterfly ! *
Thou'rt gone, as a dew-drop is swept from the bough,
—Oh ! for the world where thy home is now !
How may we love but in doubt and fear,
How may we anchor our fond hearts here,
How should e'en Joy but a trembler be,
Beautiful dust ! when we look on thee ?

* A butterfly, as if fluttering on a flower, is sculptured on the monument.

THE LADY OF THE CASTLE.

FROM "THE PORTRAIT GALLERY," AN UNFINISHED POEM.

THOU seest her pictured with her shining hair,
 (Fam'd were its tresses in Provençal song.)
 Half braided, half o'er cheek and bosom fair
 Let loose, and pouring sunny waves along
 Her gorgeous vest.—A child's light hand is roving
 'Midst the rich curls, and oh ! how meekly loving
 Its earnest looks are lifted to the face,
 Which bends to meet its lip in laughing grace.—
 Yet that bright lady's eye methinks hath less
 Of deep, and still, and pensive tenderness,
 Than might beseech a mother's—on her brow
 Something too much there sits of native scorn,
 And her smile kindles with a conscious glow,
 As from the thought of sovereign beauty born.
 —These may be dreams—but how shall woman tell
 Of woman's shame, and not with tears?—she fell !
 That mother left that child—went hurrying by
 Its cradle—haply, not without a sigh—
 Haply one moment o'er its rest serene
 She hung—but no ! it could not thus have been,
For she went on !—forsook her home, her hearth,
 All pure affection, all sweet household mirth,
 To live a gaudy and dishonour'd thing,
 Sharing in gilt the splendours of a king.

Her lord, in very weariness of life,
 Girt on his sword for scenes of distant strife ;
 He reck'd no more of glory—grief and shame
 Crush'd out his fiery nature, and his name
 Died silently.—A shadow o'er his halls
 Crept year by year ; the minstrel pass'd their walls,
 The warder's horn hung mute ;—meantime the child
 On whose first flowering thoughts no parent smil'd,
 A gentle girl, and yet deep-hearted, grew
 Into sad youth ; for well, too well she knew
 Her mother's tale !—Its memory made the sky
 Seem all too joyous for her shrinking eye ;
 Check'd on her lip the flow of song, which fain
 Would there have lingered ; flush'd her cheek to pain,
 If met by sudden glance ; and gave a tone
 Of sorrow, as for something lovely gone,

Ev'n to the Spring's glad voice.—Her own was low,
And plaintive—oh ! there lie such depths of woe
In a *young* blighted spirit.—Manhood rears
A haughty brow, and Age has done with tears,
But Youth bows down to misery, in amaze
At the dark cloud o'er mantling its fresh days ;
And thus it was with her.—A mournful sight
In one so fair ; for she indeed was fair—
Not with her mother's dazzling eyes of light,
Hers were more shadowy, full of thought and prayer
And with long lashes o'er a white-rose cheek
Drooping in gloom, yet tender still, and meek,
Still that fond child's—and oh ! the brow above,
So pale and pure ! so form'd for holy love
To gaze upon in silence ! but she felt
That love was not for her, though hearts would melt
Where'er she moved, and reverence mutely given
Went with her ; and low prayers, that call'd on Heaven
To bless the young Isaure.—

One sunny morn,
With alms before her castle-gate she stood,
'Midst peasant-groups ; when breathless and o'erworn,
And shrouded in long weeds of widowhood,
A stranger through them broke—the orphan maid
With her sweet voice, and proffer'd hand of aid,
Turn'd to give welcome ; but a wild sad look
Met hers—a gaze that all her spirit shook ;
And that pale woman, suddenly subdued
By some strong passion in its gushing mood,
Knelt at her feet, and bath'd them with such tears
As rain the hoarded agonies of years
From the heart's urn—and with her white lips prest
The ground they trod—then, burying in her vest
Her brow's deep flush, sobb'd out, “ Oh ! undefiled !
I am thy mother !—spurn me not, my child ! ”

Isaure had pray'd for that lost mother—wept
O'er her stain'd memory, when the happy slept,
In the hush'd midnight ; stood with mournful gaze
Before yon pictured smile of other days ;
But never breath'd in human ear the name
Which weigh'd her being to the earth with shame.
What marvel if the anguish of surprise,
The dark remembrances, the alter'd guise,
Awhile o'erpower'd her ?—from the weeper's touch
She shrank—'twas but a moment—yet too much

For that all-humbled one—its mortal stroke
 Came down like lightning's, and her full heart broke
 At once in silence.—Heavily and prone
 She sank, while, o'er her castle's threshold-stone,
 Those long fair tresses—they still brightly wore
 Their early pride, though bound with pearls no more—
 Bursting their fillet, in sad beauty roll'd,
 And swept the dust with coils of wavy gold.

Her child bent o'er her—call'd her—'twas too late !
 Dead lay the wanderer at her own proud gate.—
 The joy of courts, the star of knight and bard—
 How didst thou fall, O, bright-hair'd Ermengarde !

TO THE IVY.

OCCASIONED BY RECEIVING A LEAF GATHERED IN THE
 CASTLE OF RHEINFELS.

OH ! how could Fancy crown with thee,
 In ancient days the god of wine,
 And bid thee at the banquet be,
 Companion of the vine ?
 Thy home, wild plant, is where each sound
 Of revelry hath long been o'er ;
 Where song's full notes once peal'd around,
 But now are heard no more.

The Roman, on his battle plains,
 Where kings before his eagles bent,
 Entwin'd thee, with exulting strains,
 Around the victor's tent ;
 Yet there though, fresh in glossy green,
 Triumphant thy boughs might wave,—
 Better thou lov'st the silent scene,
 Around the victor's grave.

Where sleep the sons of ages flown,
 The bards and heroes of the past,
 Where, through the halls of glory gone,
 Murmurs the wintry blast ;
 Where years are hastening to efface
 Each record of the grand and fair—
 Thou in thy solitary grace,
 Wreath of the tomb ! art there.

Oh ! many a temple, once sublime,
Beneath a blue, Italian sky,
Hath nought of beauty left by time,
Save thy wild tapestry.
And, rear'd 'midst crags and clouds, 'tis thine
To wave where banners waved of yore,
O'er towers that crest the noble Rhine,
Along his rocky shore.

High from the fields of air, look down
Those eyries of a vanish'd race,
Homes of the mighty, whose renown
Hath pass'd and left no trace.
But thou art there—thy foliage bright,
Unchang'd, the mountain-storm can brave—
Thou that wilt climb the loftiest height,
And deck the humblest grave.

The breathing forms of Parian stone,
That rise round Grandeur's marble halls;
The vivid hues by painting thrown
Rich o'er the glowing walls;
Th' acanthus on Corinthian fanes,
In sculptur'd beauty waving fair,—
These perish all—and what remains?—
Thou, thou alone art there.

'Tis still the same—where'er we tread,
The wrecks of human power we see,
The marvels of all ages fled,
Left to Decay and thee.
And still let man his fabrics rear,
August in beauty, grace, and strength—
Days pass, thou "Ivy never sere," *
And all is thine at length.

ON A LEAF FROM THE TOMB OF VIRGIL.

AND was thy home, pale wither'd thing,
Beneath the rich blue southern sky?
Wert thou a nursling of the Spring,
The winds, and suns of glorious Italy?

* "Ye myrtles brown, and ivy never sere."—*Lycidas*.

A Butterfly Resting on a Skull.

Those suns in golden light, e'en now,
 Look o'er the Poet's lovely grave,
 Those winds are breathing soft, but thou
 Answering their whisper, there no more shalt wave

The flowers o'er Posilippo's brow,
 May cluster in their purple bloom,
 But on th' o'ershadowing ilex-bough,
 Thy breezy place is void, by Virgil's tomb.

Thy place is void—oh ! none on earth,
 This crowded earth, may so remain,
 Save that which souls of loftiest birth
 Leave when they part, their brighter home to gain.

Another leaf ere now hath sprung,
 On the green stem which once was thine—
 When shall another strain be sung
 Like his whose dust hath made that spot a shrine?

FOR A DESIGN OF A BUTTERFLY RESTING
 ON A SKULL.

CREATURE of air and light,
 Emblem of that which may not fade or die,
 Wilt thou not speed thy flight,
 To chase the south-wind through the glowing sky?
 What lures thee thus to stay,
 With Silence and Decay,
 Fix'd on the wreck of cold Mortality?

The thoughts once chamber'd there,
 Have gather'd up their treasures, and are gone—
 Will the dust tell us where
 They that have burst the prison-house are flown?
 Rise, nursling of the day,
 If thou wouldst trace their way—
 Earth hath no voice to make the secret known.

Who seeks the vanish'd bird
 By the forsaken nest and broken shell?—
 Far thence he sings unheard,
 Yet free and joyous in the woods to dwell.
 Thou of the sunshine born,
 Take the bright wings of morn !
 Thy hope calls heaven-ward from yon ruin'd cell.

THE SLEEPER ON MARATHON.

I LAY upon the solemn plain
And by the funeral mound,
Where those who died not there in vain,
Their place of sleep had found.
'Twas silent where the free blood gush'd,
When Persia came array'd—
So many a voice had there been hush'd,
So many a footstep stay'd.

I slumber'd on the lonely spot,
So sanctified by Death—
I slumber'd—but my rest was not
As theirs who lay beneath.
For on my dreams, that shadowy hour,
They rose—the chainless dead—
All arm'd they sprang, in joy, in power,
Up from their grassy bed.

I saw their spears, on that red field,
Flash as in time gone by—
Chas'd to the seas, without his shield
I saw the Persian fly.
I woke—the sudden trumpet's blast
Call'd to another fight—
From visions of our glorious past,
Who doth not wake in might?

TROUBADOUR SONG.

THE warrior cross'd the ocean's foam,
For the stormy fields of war—
The maid was left in a smiling home,
And a sunny land afar.

His voice was heard where javelin showers
Pour'd on the steel-clad line ;
Her step was 'midst the summer-flowers,
Her seat beneath the vine.

The Dying Bard's Prophecy.

His shield was cleft, his lance was riven,
 And the red blood stain'd his crest ;
 While she—the gentlest wind of heaven
 Might scarcely fan her breast.

Yet a thousand arrows pass'd him by,
 And again he cross'd the seas ;
 But she had died, as roses die,
 That perish with a breeze.

As roses die, when the blast is come,
 For all things bright and fair—
 There was death within the smiling home,
 How had death found her there ?

THE DYING BARD'S PROPHECY.

AT THE TIME OF THE SUPPOSED MASSACRE BY EDWARD I.

THE Hall of Harps is lone this night,
 And cold the chieftain's hearth ;
 It hath no mead, it hath no light,
 No voice of melody, no sound of mirth.

And I depart—my wound is deep,
 My brethren long have died—
 Yet, ere my soul grow dark with sleep,
 Winds ! bear the spoiler one more tone of pride.

Bear it, where on his battle-plain,
 Beneath the setting sun,
 He counts my country's noble slain—
 Say to him—Saxon ! think not *all* is won.

Thou hast laid low the warrior's head,
 The minstrel's chainless hand ;
 Dreamer ! that numberest with the dead
 The burning spirit of the mountain-land.

Think'st thou, because the song hath ceas'd,
 The *soul* of song is flown ?
 Think'st thou it woke to crown the feast,
 It lived beside the ruddy hearth alone ?

No ! by our names and by our blood,
We leave it pure and free—
Though hush'd awhile, that sounding flood
Shall roll in joy through ages yet to be.

We leave it, 'midst our country's woe,
The birthright of her breast—
We leave it, as we leave the snow,
Bright and eternal, on Eryri's* crest.

We leave it, with our fame to dwell,
Upon our children's breath—
Our voice in theirs through time shall swell—
The bard hath gifts of prophecy from death.

He dies—but yet the mountains stands,
Yet sweeps the torrent's tide,
And this is yet Aneurin's† land—
Winds! bear the spoiler one more tone of pride.

A VOYAGER'S DREAM OF LAND.

“His very heart athirst
To gaze at Nature in her green array,
Upon the ship's tall side he stands, possess'd
With visions prompted by intense desire;
Fair fields appear below, such as he left
Far distant, such as he would die to find—
He seeks them headlong, and is seen no more.”

COWPER.

THE hollow dash of waves !—the ceaseless roar !
Silence, ye billows—vex my soul no more !

There's a spring in the woods by my sunny home,
Afar from the dark sea's tossing foam ;
Oh ! the fall of that fountain is sweet to hear,
As a song from the shore to the sailor's ear.
And the sparkle which up to the sun it throws,
Through the feathery fern, and the olive boughs,
And the gleam on its path as it steals away
Into deeper shades from the sultry day,

* Eryri, the Welsh name for Snowdon.

† Aneurin, a celebrated ancient British bard.

And the large water-lilies that o'er its bed
Their pearly leaves to the soft light spread,
They haunt me !—I dream of that bright spring's flow,
I thirst for its rills, like a wounded roe.

Be still, thou sea-bird, with thy clanging cry,
My spirit sickens as thy wing sweeps by !

Know ye my home, with the lulling sound
Of leaves from the lime and the chestnut round ?
Know ye it, brethren, where bower'd it lies,
Under the purple of southern skies ?
With the streamy gold of the sun that shines
In through the cloud of its clustering vines,
And the breath of the fainting myrtle-flowers,
Borne from the mountains in dewy hours,
And the fire-fly's glance through the darkening shades,
Like shooting stars in the forest-glades,
And the scent of the citron at eve's dim fall—
Speak !—have ye known, have ye felt them all ?

The heavy-rolling surge,—the rocking mast !
Hush !—give my dream's deep music way, thou blast !

Oh ! the glad sounds of the joyous earth !
The notes of the singing cicala's mirth,
The murmurs that live in the mountain-pines,
The sighing of reeds as the day declines,
The wings fitting home through the crimson glow
That steeps the woods when the sun is low,
The voice of the night-bird that sends a thrill
To the heart of the leaves when the winds are still—
I hear them !—around me they rise, they swell,
They claim back my spirit with Hope to dwell,
They come with a breath from the fresh spring-time,
And waken my youth in its hour of prime.

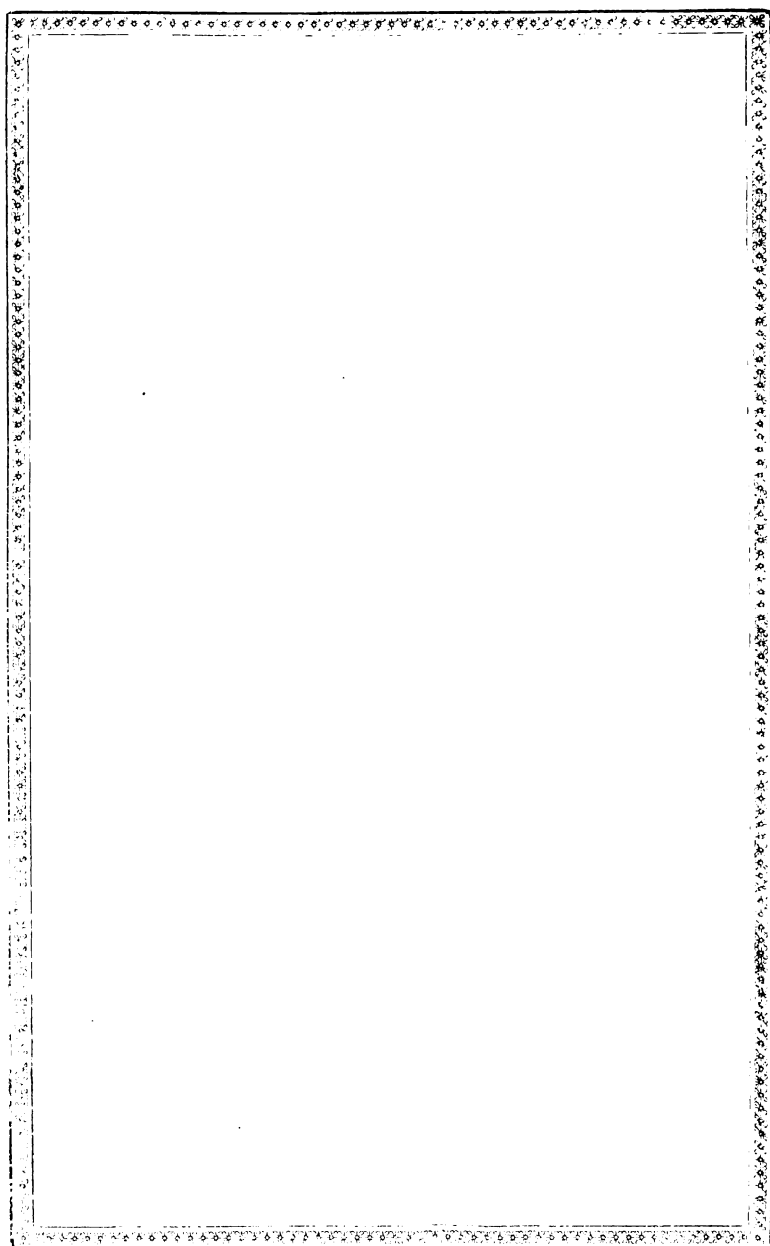
The white foam dashes high—away, away,
Shroud my green land no more, thou blinding spray !

It is there !—down the mountains I see the sweep
Of the chestnut forests, the rich and deep ;
With the burden and glory of flowers that they wear,
Floating upborne on the blue summer-air,
And the light pouring through them in tender gleams,
And the flashing forth of a thousand streams.—



"Seek thou the well-known glade."

[p. 210.]



Hold me not, brethren, I go, I go,
To the hills of my youth, where the myrtles blow,
To the depths of the woods, where the shadows rest,
Massy and still, on the greensward's breast,
To the rocks that resound with the water's play—
I hear the sweet laugh of my fount—give way !

Give way !—the booming surge, the tempest's roar,
The sea-bird's wail, shall vex my soul no more.

THE GRAVE OF KÖRNER.

CHARLES THEODORE KÖRNER, the celebrated young German poet and soldier, was killed in a skirmish with a detachment of French troops, on the 20th of August, 1813, a few hours after the composition of his popular piece, "The Sword Song." He was buried at the village of Wöbbelin, in Mecklenburg, under a beautiful oak, in a recess of which he had frequently deposited verses composed by him while campaigning in its vicinity. The monument erected to his memory is of cast-iron, and the upper part is wrought into a lyre and a sword, a favourite emblem of Körner's, from which one of his works had been entitled. Near the grave of the poet is that of his only sister, who died of grief for his loss, having only survived him long enough to complete his portrait, and a drawing of his burial-place. Over the gate of the cemetery is engraved one of his own lines :—

"Vergiss die treuen Tödteten nicht,"
(Forget not the faithful Dead.)

—See *Downes's Letters from Mecklenburg*, and *Körner's Prosaische Aufsätze*, von C. A. Tiedge.

GREEN wave the oak for ever o'er thy rest,
Thou that beneath its crowning foliage sleepest,
And, in the stillness of thy country's breast,
Thy place of memory, as an altar, keepest ;
Brightly thy spirit o'er her hills was pour'd,
Thou of the Lyre and Sword !

Rest, Bard ! rest, Soldier !—by the father's hand
Here shall the child of after years be led,
With his wreath-offering silently to stand,
In the hush'd presence of the glorious dead.
Soldier and Bard ! for thou thy path hast trod
With Freedom and with God.*

* The poems of Körner, which were chiefly devoted to the cause of his country, are strikingly distinguished by religious feelings, and a confidence in the Supreme Justice for the final deliverance of Germany.

The oak waved proudly o'er thy burial rite,
On thy crown'd bier to slumber warriors bore thee,
And with true hearts thy brethren of the fight
Wept as they vail'd their drooping banners o'er thee :
And the deep guns with rolling peal gave token,
That Lyre and Sword were broken.

Thou hast a hero's tomb—a lowlier bed
Is hers, the gentle girl beside thee lying—
The gentle girl, that bow'd her fair young head,
When thou wert gone, in silent sorrow dying.
Brother, true friend ! the tender and the brave—
She pin'd to share thy grave.

Fame was thy gift from others—but for *her*,
To whom the wide world held that only spot—
She lov'd thee—lovely in your lives ye were,
And in your early deaths divided not.
Thou hast thine oak, thy trophy—what hath she ?—
Her own blest place by thee !

It was thy spirit, brother ! which had made
The bright world glorious to her thoughtful eye,
Since first in childhood 'midst the vines ye play'd,
And sent glad singing through the free blue sky.
Ye were but two—and when that spirit pass'd,
Woe to the one, the last !

Woe, yet not long—she linger'd but to trace
Thine image from the image in her breast,
Once, once again to see that buried face
But smile upon her, ere she went to rest,
Too sad a smile ! its living light was o'er—
It answer'd hers no more.

The earth grew silent when thy voice departed,
The home too lonely whence thy step had fled—
What then was left for her, the faithful-hearted ?—
Death, death, to still the yearning for the dead.
Softly she perish'd—be the Flower deplor'd,
Here with the Lyre and Sword.

Have ye not met ere now ?—so let those trust
That meet for moments but to part for years,
That weep, watch, pray, to hold back dust from dust,
That love, where love is but a fount of tears.
Brother, sweet sister ! peace around ye dwell—
Lyre, Sword, and Flower, farewell !

THE GRAVES OF A HOUSEHOLD.

THEY grew in beauty, side by side,
They fill'd one home with glee—
Their graves are sever'd far and wide,
By mount, and stream, and sea.

The same fond mother bent at night
O'er each fair sleeping brow ;
She had each folded flower in sight—
Where are those dreamers now ?

One, 'midst the forests of the West,
By a dark stream is laid—
The Indian knows his place of rest,
Far in the cedar shade.

The sea, the blue lone sea, hath one ;
He lies where pearls lie deep—
He was the loved of all, yet none
O'er his low bed may weep.

One sleeps where southern vines are drest,
Above the noble slain ;
He wrapt his colours round his breast,
On a blood-red field of Spain.

And one—o'er *her* the myrtle showers
Its leaves, by soft winds fann'd ;
She faded 'midst Italian flowers,
The last of that bright band.

And parted thus they rest, who play'd
Beneath the same green tree ;
Whose voices mingled as they pray'd
Around one parent knee !

They that with smiles lit up the hall,
And cheer'd with song the hearth—
Alas ! for love, if *thou* wert all,
And nought beyond, O earth !

THE LAST WISH.

Go to the forest shade,
Seek thou the well-known glade
Where, heavy with sweet dew, the violets lie ;
Gleaming through moss-tufts deep,
Like dark eyes fill'd with sleep,
And bath'd in hues of summer's midnight sky.

Bring me their buds, to shed
Around my dying bed
A breath of May, and of the wood's repose ;
For I, in sooth, depart
With a reluctant heart,
That fain would linger where the bright sun glows.

Fain would I stay with thee—
Alas ! this must not be ;
Yet bring me still the gifts of happier hours !
Go where the fountain's breast
Catches, in glassy rest,
The dim green light that pours through laurel bowers

I know how softly bright,
Steep'd in that tender light,
The water-lilies tremble there, e'en now ;
Go to the pure stream's edge,
And from its whispering sedge
Bring me those flowers, to cool my fever'd brow.

Then, as in hope's young days,
Track thou the antique maze
Of the rich garden, to its grassy mound ;
There is a lone white rose,
Shedding, in sudden snows,
Its faint leaves o'er the emerald turf around.

Well know'st thou that fair tree !—
A murmur of the bee
Dwells even in the honied lime above ;
Bring me one pearly flower,
Of all its clustering shower—
For on that spot we first reveal'd our love !

Gather one woodbine bough,
Then, from the lattice low
Of the bower'd cottage which I bade thee mark,
When by the hamlet last
Through dim wood-lanes we pass'd,
Where dews were glancing to the glow-worm's spark.

Haste ! to my-pillow bear
Those fragrant things, and fair—
My hand no more may bind them up at eve,
Yet shall their odour soft
One bright dream round me waft,
Of life, youth, summer—all that I must leave !

And oh ! if thou wouldst ask,
Wherefore thy steps I task,
The grove, the stream, the hamlet-vale to trace ;—
'Tis that some thought of me,
When I am gone, may be
The spirit bound to each familiar place.

I bid mine image dwell,
(Oh ! break thou not the spell !)
In the deep wood, and by the fountain-side—
Thou must not, my beloved !
Rove where we two have roved,
Forgetting her that in her spring-time died.

A MONARCH'S DEATH-BED.

THE Emperor Albert of Hapsburg, who was assassinated by his nephew, afterwards called John the Parricide, was left to die by the way-side, and was supported in his last moments by a female peasant, who happened to be passing.

A MONARCH on his death-bed lay—
Did censers waft perfume,
And soft lamps pour their silvery ray,
Through his proud chamber's gloom ?—
He lay upon a greensward bed,
Beneath a darkening sky—
A lone tree waving o'er his head,
A swift stream rolling by.

The Release of Tasso.

Had he then fallen, as warriors fall,
 Where spear strikes fire from spear?—
 Was there a banner for his pall,
 A buckler for his bier?—
 Not so—nor cloven shields nor helms
 Had strewn the bloody sod,
 Where he, the helpless lord of realms,
 Yielded his soul to God.

Were there not friends, with words of cheer
 And princely vassals nigh?
 And priests, the crucifix to rear
 Before the fading eye?—
 A peasant girl, that royal head
 Upon her bosom laid;
 And, shrinking not for woman's dread,
 The face of death survey'd.

Alone she sat—from hill and wood
 Red sank the mournful sun;
 Fast gush'd the fount of noble blood,
 Treason its worst had done!
 With her long hair she vainly press'd
 The wounds, to stanch their tide—
 Unknown, on that meek humble breast,
 Imperial Albert died!

 THE RELEASE OF TASSO.

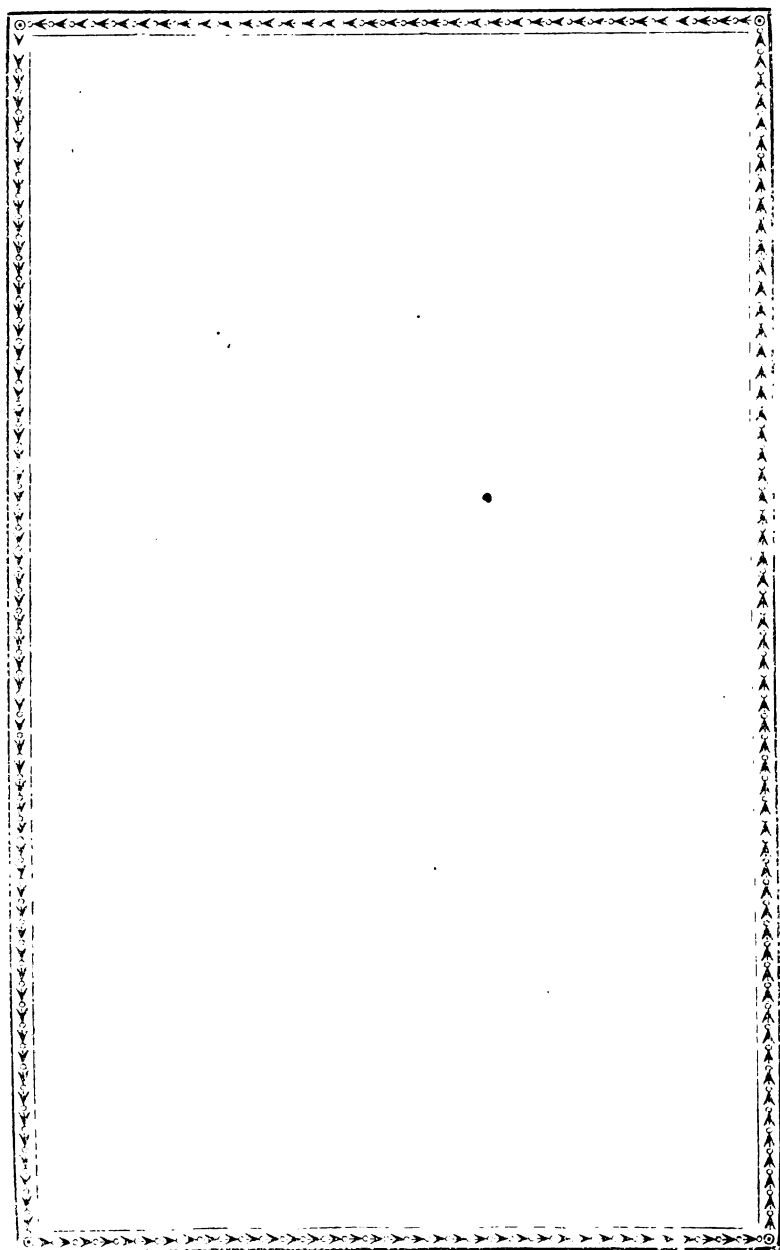
THERE came a bard to Rome; he brought a lyre
 Of sounds to peal through Rome's triumphant sky,
 To mourn a hero on his funeral pyre,
 Or greet a conqueror with its war-notes high;
 For on each chord had fallen the gift of fire,
 The living breath of Power and Victory—
 Yet he, its lord, the sovereign city's guest,
 Sigh'd but to flee away, and be at rest.

He brought a spirit whose ethereal birth
 Was of the loftiest, and whose haunts had been
 Amidst the marvels and the pomps of earth,
 Wild fairy-bowers, and groves of deathless green,
 And fields, where mail-clad bosoms prove their worth,
 When flashing swords light up the stormy scene—
 He brought a weary heart, a wasted frame,—
 The Child of Visions from a dungeon came.



"Unknown, on that meek humble breast,
Imperial Albert died!"

[P. 212.]



On the blue waters, as in joy they sweep,
With starlight floating o'er their swells and falls,
On the blue waters of the Adrian deep,
His numbers had been sung—and in the halls,
Where, through rich foliage if a sunbeam peep,
It seems Heaven's wakening to the sculptur'd walls,—
Had princes listen'd to those lofty strains,
While the high soul they burst from pined in chains.

And in the summer-gardens, where the spray
Of founts, far-glancing from their marble bed,
Rains on the flowering myrtles in its play,
And the sweet limes, and glassy leaves that spread
Round the deep golden citrons—o'er his lay
Dark eyes—dark, soft, Italian eyes—had shed
Warm tears, fast glittering in that sun, whose light
Was a forbidden glory to his sight.

Oh ! if it be that wizard sign and spell,
And talisman had power of old to bind,
In the dark chambers of some cavern-cell,
Or knotted oak, the spirits of the wind,
Things of the lightning-pinion, wont to dwell
High o'er the reach of eagles, and to find
Joy in the rush of storms—even such a doom
Was that high minstrel's in his dungeon-gloom.

But he was free at last !—the glorious land
Of the white Alps and pine-crown'd Apennines,
Along whose shore the sapphire seas expand,
And the wastes teem with myrtle, and the shrines
Of long-forgotten gods from Nature's hand
Receive bright offerings still ; with all its vines,
And rocks, and ruins, clear before him lay—
The seal was taken from the founts of day.

The winds came o'er his cheek ; the soft winds, blending
All summer-sounds and odours in their sigh ;
The orange-groves waved round ; the hills were sending
Their bright streams down ; the free birds darting by,
And the blue festal heavens above him bending,
As if to fold a world where none could die !
And who was he that look'd upon these things ?—
If but of earth, yet one whose thoughts were wings

To bear him o'er creation ! and whose mind
Was as an air-harp, wakening to the sway

The Release of Tasso.

Of sunny Nature's breathings unconfined,
With all the mystic harmonies that lay
Far in the slumber of its chords enshrined,
Till the light breeze went thrilling on its way.—
There was no sound that wander'd through the sky,
But told him secrets in its melody.

Was the deep forest lonely unto him,
With all its whispering leaves? Each dell and glade
Teem'd with such forms as on the moss-clad brim
Of fountains, in their sparry grottoes, play'd,
Seen by the Greek of yore through twilight dim,
Or misty noontide in the laurel-shade.—
There is no solitude on earth so deep
As that where man decrees that man should weep!

But oh! the life in Nature's green domains,
The breathing sense of joy! where flowers are springing
By starry thousands, on the slopes and plains,
And the grey rocks—and all the arch'd woods ringing,
And the young branches trembling to the strains
Of wild-born creatures, through the sunshine winging
Their fearless flight—and sylvan echoes round,
Mingling all tones to one Æolian sound;

And the glad voice, the laughing voice of streams,
And the low cadence of the silvery sea,
And reed-notes from the mountains, and the beams
Of the warm sun—all these are for the free!
And they were *his* once more, the bard, whose dreams
Their spirit still had haunted.—Could it be
That he had borne the chain?—oh! who shall dare
To say how much man's heart uncrush'd may bear?

So deep a root hath hope!—but woe for this,
Our frail mortality, that aught so bright,
So almost burthen'd with excess of bliss,
As the rich hour which back to summer's light
Calls the worn captive, with the gentle kiss
Of winds, and gush of waters, and the sight
Of the green earth, must so be bought with years
Of the heart's fever, parching up its tears;

And feeding a slow fire on all its powers,
Until the boon for which we grasp in vain,
If hardly won at length, too late made ours,
When the soul's wing is broken, comes like rain

Withheld till evening, on the stately flowers
Which wither'd in the noontide, ne'er again
To lift their heads in glory.—So doth Earth
Breathe on her gifts, and melt away their worth.

The sailor dies in sight of that green shore,
Whose fields, in slumbering beauty, seem'd to lie
On the deep's foam, amidst its hollow roar
Call'd up to sunlight by his fantasy—
And, when the shining desert-mists that wore
The lake's bright semblance, have been all pass'd by,
The pilgrim sinks beside the fountain-wave,
Which flashes from its rock, too late to save.

Or if we live, if that, too dearly bought,
And made too precious by long hopes and fears,
Remains our own—love, darken'd and o'erwrought
By memory of privation—love, which wears
And casts o'er life a troubled hue of thought,
Becomes the shadow of our closing years,
Making it almost misery to possess
Aught watch'd with such unquiet tenderness.

Such unto him, the bard, the worn and wild,
And sick with hope deferr'd, from whom the sky,
With all its clouds in burning glory piled,
Had been shut out by long captivity;
Such, freedom was to Tasso.—As a child
Is to the mother, whose foreboding eye
In its too radiant glance, from day to day,
Reads that which calls the brightest first away.

And he became a wanderer—in whose breast
Wild fear, which, e'en when every sense doth sleep,
Clings to the burning heart, a wakeful guest,
Sat brooding as a spirit, raised to keep
Its gloomy vigil of intense unrest
O'er treasures, burthening life, and buried deep
In cavern-tomb, and sought, through shades and stealth,
By some pale mortal, trembling at his wealth.

But woe for those who trample o'er a mind !
A deathless thing.—They know not what they do,
Or what they deal with !—Man perchance may bind
The flower his step hath bruised ; or light anew
The torch he quenches ; or to music wind
Again the lyre-string from his touch that flew—

But for the soul !—oh ! tremble, and beware
To lay rude hands upon God's mysteries *there* !

For blindness wraps that world—our touch may turn
Some balance, fearfully and darkly hung,
Or put out some bright spark, whose ray should burn
To point the way a thousand rocks among—
Or break some subtle chain, nich none discern,
Though binding down the terrible, the strong,
Th' o'ersweeping passions—which to loose on life
Is to set free the elements for strife !

Who then to power and glory shall restore
That which our evil rashness hath undone ?
Who unto mystic harmony once more
Attune those viewless chords ?—There is but One !
He that through dust the stream of life can pour,
The Mighty and the Merciful alone !—
Yet oft His paths have midnight for their shade—
He leaves to man the ruin man hath made !

TASSO AND HIS SISTER.

"DEVANT vous est Sorrente ; là demeuroit la sœur de Tasse, quand il vint en pèlerin demander à cette obscure amie, un asile contre l'injustice des princes. — Ses longues douleurs avoient presque égaré sa raison ; il ne lui restoit plus que du génie."—*Corinne*.

SHE sat, where on each wind that sigh'd
The citron's breath went by ;
While the deep gold of eventide
Burn'd in the Italian sky.
Her bower was one where daylight's close
Full oft sweet laughter found,
As thence the voice of childhood rose
To the high vineyards round.

But still and thoughtful, at her knee,
Her children stood that hour,
Their bursts of song, and dancing glee,
Hush'd as by words of power.

With bright, fix'd, wondering eyes that gazed
Up to their mother's face ;
With brows through parting ringlets raised,
They stood in silent grace.

While she—yet something o'er her look
Of mournfulness was spread—
Forth from a poet's magic book
The glorious numbers read ;
The proud, undying lay, which pour'd
Its light on evil years ;
His of the gifted Pen and Sword,*
The triumph and the tears.

She read of fair Erminia's flight,
Which Venice once might hear,
Sung on her glittering seas at night,
By many a gondolier ;
Of him she read, who broke the charm
That wrapt the myrtle grove ;
Of Godfrey's deeds, of Tancred's arm,
That slew his Paynim love.

Young cheeks around that bright page glow'd,
Young holy hearts were stirr'd ;
And the meek tears of woman flow'd
Fast o'er each burning word.
And sounds of breeze, and fount, and leaf,
Came sweet each pause between ;
When a strange voice of sudden grief
Burst on the gentle scene.

The mother turn'd—a way-worn man,
In pilgrim garb stood nigh,
Of stately mien, yet wild and wan,
Of proud, yet restless eye.
But drops that would not stay for pride,
From that dark eye gush'd free,
As, pressing his pale brow, he cried,
“Forgotten ! e'en by thee !

“Am I so changed ?—and yet we two
Oft hand in hand have play'd—
This brow hath been all bathed in dew,
From wreaths which thou hast made.

* It is scarcely necessary to recall the well-known Italian saying, that Tasso with his sword and pen was superior to all men.

To the Poet Wordsworth.

We have knelt down and said one prayer,
 And sang one vesper strain—
 My thoughts are dim with clouds of care—
 Tell me those words again !

“ Life hath been heavy on my head ;
 I come, a stricken deer,
 Bearing the heart, 'midst crowds that bled,
 To bleed in stillness here.”—
 She gazed—till thoughts that long had slept,
 Shook all her thrilling frame—
 She fell upon his neck, and wept,
 And breathed her brother's name.

Her brother's name !—and who was he,
 The weary one, th' unknown,
 That came, the bitter world to flee,
 A stranger to his own ?—
 He was the bard of gifts divine,
 To sway the hearts of men ;
 He of the song for Salem's shrine,
 He of the Sword and Pen !

TO THE POET WORDSWORTH.

THINE is a strain to read amongst the hills,
 The old and full of voices—by the source
 Of some free stream, whose gladdening presence fills
 The solitude with sound—for in its course
 Even such is thy deep song, that seems a part
 Of those high scenes, a fountain from their heart.

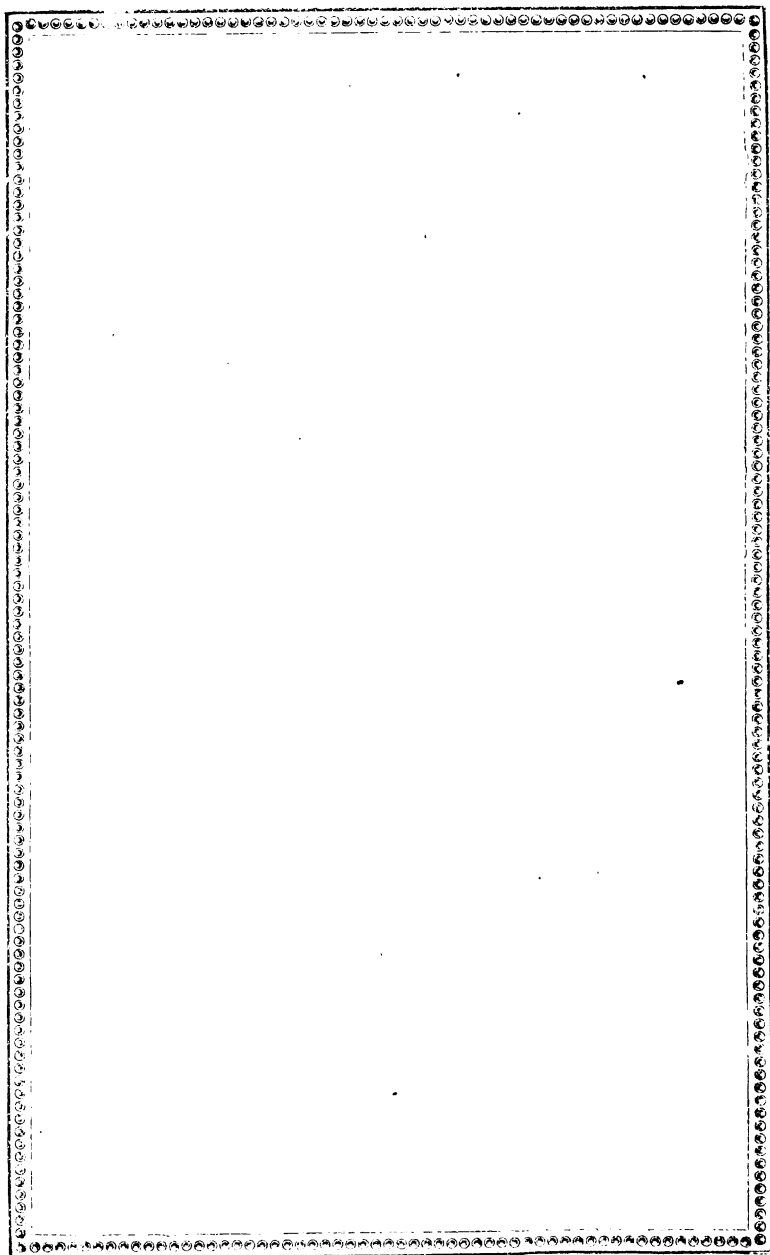
Or its calm spirit fitly may be taken
 To the still breast, in some sweet garden-bowers,
 Where summer winds each tree's low tones awaken,
 And bud and bell with changes mark the hours.
 There let thy thoughts be with me, while the day
 Sinks with a golden and serene decay.

Or by some hearth where happy faces meet,
 When night hath hush'd the woods with all their birds,
 There, from some gentle voice, that lay were sweet
 As antique music, link'd with household words.
 While, in pleased murmurs, woman's lip might move,
 And the rais'd eye of childhood shine in love.



"Hark ! from the dim church tower,
The deep, slow curfew's chime !"

[p. 223.]



Or where the shadows of dark solemn yews
Brood silently o'er some lone burial-ground,
Thy verse hath power that brightly might diffuse
A breath, a kindling, as of spring, around,
From its own glow of hope and courage high,
And steadfast faith's victorious constancy.

True bard and holy !—thou art e'en as one
Who, by some secret gift of soul or eye,
In every spot beneath the smiling sun,
Sees where the springs of living waters lie—
Unseen awhile they sleep—till, touch'd by thee,
Bright, healthful waves flow forth, to each glad wanderer free !

THE SONG OF THE CURFEW.

HARK ! from the dim church-tower,
The deep, slow curfew's chime !
A heavy sound unto hall and bower,
In England's olden time !
Sadly 'twas heard by him who came
From the fields of his toil at night,
And who might not see his own hearth's flame
In his children's eyes make light.

Sadly and sternly heard
As it quench'd the wood-fire's glow,
Which had cheer'd the board, with the mirthful word,
And the red wine's foaming flow ;
Until that sullen, booming knell,
Flung out from every fane,
On harp, and lip, and spirit fell,
With a weight, and with a chain.

Woe for the wanderer then
In the wild-deer's forests far !
No cottage-lamp, to the haunts of men,
Might guide him as a star.
And woe for him whose wakeful soul,
With lone aspirings fill'd,
Would have lived o'er some immortal scroll,
While the sounds of earth were still'd.

Hymn for Christmas.

And yet a deeper woe,
 For the watchers by the bed,
 Where the fondly lov'd, in pain lay low,
 And rest forsook the head.
 For the mother, doom'd *unseen* to keep
 By the dying babe her place,
 And to feel its flitting pulse, and weep,
 Yet not behold its face !

Darkness, in chieftain's hall !
 Darkness, in peasant's cot !
 While Freedom, under that shadowy pall,
 Sat mourning o'er her lot.
 Oh ! the fireside's peace we well may prize,
 For blood hath flow'd like rain,
 Pour'd forth to make sweet sanctuaries
 Of England's homes again !

Heap the yule-faggots high,
 Till the red light fills the room !
 It is home's own hour, when the stormy sky
 Grows thick with evening gloom.
 Gather ye round the holy hearth,
 And by its gladdening blaze,
 Unto thankful bliss we will change our mirth
 With a thought of the olden days.

 HYMN FOR CHRISTMAS.

OH ! lovely voices of the sky
 Which hymn'd the Saviour's birth,
 Are ye not singing still on high,
 Ye that sang, "Peace on earth" ?
 To us yet speak the strains
 Wherewith, in time gone by,
 Ye bless'd the Syrian swains,
 Oh ! voices of the sky !

Oh ! clear and shining light, whose beams
 That hour Heaven's glory shed,
 Around the palms, and o'er the streams,
 And on the shepherd's head,
 Be near, through life and death,
 As in that holiest night
 Of hope, and joy, and faith—
 Oh ! clear and shining light !

Oh! star which led to Him, whose love
Brought down man's ransom free—
Where art thou?—'midst the host above,
May we still gaze on thee?
In heaven thou art not set,
Thy rays earth may not dim;
Send them to guide us yet,
Oh! star which led to Him!

CHRIST STILLING THE TEMPEST.

"But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves; for the wind was contrary."—*St. Matthew, xiv. 24.*

FEAR was within the tossing bark,
When stormy winds grew loud;
And waves came rolling high and dark,
And the tall mast was bow'd.

And men stood breathless in their dread,
And baffled in their skill—
But One was there, who rose and said
To the wild sea, "Be still!"

And the wind ceased—it ceased!—that word
Pass'd through the gloomy sky;
The troubled billows knew their Lord,
And sank beneath his eye.

And slumber settled on the deep,
And silence on the blast,
As when the righteous falls asleep,
When death's fierce throes are past.

Thou that didst rule the angry hour,
And tame the tempest's mood—
Oh! send thy spirit forth in power,
O'er our dark souls to brood!

Thou that didst bow the billow's pride,
Thy mandates to fulfil—
Speak, speak to passion's raging tide,
Speak and say—"Peace, be still!"

CHRIST'S AGONY IN THE GARDEN.

HE knelt—the Saviour knelt and pray'd,
When but His Father's eye
Look'd through the lonely garden's shade,
On that dread agony!
The Lord of all, above, beneath,
Was bow'd with sorrow unto death.

The sun set in a fearful hour,
The skies might well grow dim,
When this mortality had power
So to overshadow *Him*!
That He who gave man's breath might know,
The very depths of human woe.

He knew them all—the doubt, the strife,
The faint perplexing dread,
The mists that hang o'er parting life,
All darken'd round his Head!
And the Deliverer knelt to pray—
Yet pass'd it not, that cup, away.

It pass'd not—though the stormy wave
Had sunk beneath His tread;
It pass'd not—though to Him the grave
Had yielded up its dead.
But there was sent Him from on high
A gift of strength, for man to die.*

And was *His* mortal hour beset
With anguish and dismay?—
How may *we* meet our conflict yet,
In the dark, narrow way?
How, but through Him, that path who trod?
Save, or we perish, Son of God!

* "And there appeared an angel unto Him from Heaven, strengthening Him." *St. Luke* xxii. 43.

THE SUNBEAM.

THOU art no lingerer in monarch's hall,
 A joy thou art, and a wealth to all !
 A bearer of hope unto land and sea—
 Sunbeam ! what gift hath the world like thee ?

Thou art walking the billows, and Ocean smiles—
 Thou hast touch'd with glory his thousand isles—
 Thou hast lit up the ships and the feathery foam,
 And gladden'd the sailor, like words from home.

To the solemn depths of the forest-shades,
 Thou art streaming on through their green arcades,
 And the quivering leaves that have caught thy glow,
 Like fire-flies glance to the pools below.

I look'd on the mountains—a vapour lay
 Folding their heights in its dark array ;
 Thou brakest forth—and the mist became
 A crown and a mantle of living flame.

I look'd on the peasant's lowly cot—
 Something of sadness had wrapt the spot ;
 But a gleam of *thee* on its casement fell,
 And it laugh'd into beauty at that bright spell.

To the earth's wild places a guest thou art,
 Flushing the waste like the rose's heart ;
 And thou scornest not, from thy pomp to shed
 A tender light on the ruin's head.

Thou tak'st through the dim church-aisle thy way,
 And its pillars from twilight flash forth to-day,
 And its high pale tombs, with their trophies old,
 Are bathed in a flood as of burning gold.

And thou turnest not from the humblest grave,
 Where a flower to the sighing winds may wave ;
 Thou scatterest its gloom like the dreams of rest,
 Thou sleepest in love on its grassy breast.

Sunbeam of summer ! what is like thee ?
 Hope of the wilderness, joy of the sea !—
One thing is like thee, to mortals given,—
 The faith, touching all things with hues of Heaven.

THE VAUDOIS VALLEYS.

YES, thou hast met the sun's last smile,
From the haunted hills of Rome ;
By many a bright Ægean isle,
Thou hast seen the billows foam :

From the silence of the Pyramid
Thou hast watch'd the solemn flow
Of the Nile, that with its waters hid
The ancient realm below :

Thy heart hath burn'd as shepherds sung
Some wild and warlike strain,
Where the Moorish horn once proudly rung
Through the pealing hills of Spain :

And o'er the lonely Grecian streams
Thou hast heard the laurels moan,
With a sound yet murmuring in thy dreams
Of the glory that is gone.

But go thou to the pastoral vales
Of the Alpine mountains old,
If thou wouldst hear immortal tales
By the wind's deep whispers told !

Go, if thou lov'st the soil to tread,
Where man hath nobly striven,
And life, like incense, hath been shed,
An offering unto Heaven.

For o'er the snows, and round the pines,
Hath swept a noble flood ;
The nurture of the peasant's vines
Hath been the martyr's blood !

A spirit, stronger than the sword,
And loftier than despair,
Through all the heroic region pour'd,
Breathes in the generous air.

A memory clings to every steep
Of long-enduring faith,
And the sounding streams glad record keep
Of courage unto death.

Ask of the peasant *where* his sires
For truth and freedom bled,
Ask, where were lit the torturing fires,
Where lay the holy dead ;

And he will tell thee, all around,
On fount, and turf, and stone,
Far as the chamois' foot can bound,
Their ashes have been sown !

Go, when the sabbath bell is heard *
Up through the wilds to float,
When the dark old woods and caves are stirr'd
To gladness by the note ;

When forth, along their thousand rills,
The mountain people come,
Join thou their worship on those hills
Of glorious martyrdom.

And while the song of praise ascends,
And while the torrent's voice
Like the swell of many an organ blends,
Then let thy soul rejoice !

Rejoice, that human hearts, through scorn,
Through shame, through death, made strong,
Before the rocks and heavens have borne
Witness of God so long !

* See "Gilly's Researches amongst the Mountains of Piedmont," for an interesting description of a sabbath-day in the upper regions of the Vaudois. The inhabitants of these Protestant valleys, who, like the Swiss, repair with their flocks and herds to the summits of the hills during the summer, are followed thither by their pastors, and at that season of the year, assembled on that sacred day to worship in the open air.

THE BURIAL OF WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR.

LOWLY upon his bier
The royal conqueror lay,
Baron and chief stood near
Silent in war-array.

Down the long minster's aisle,
Crowds mutely gazing stream'd,
Altar and tomb, the while,
Through mists of incense gleam'd :

And by the torch's blaze
The stately priest had said
High words of power and praise,
To the glory of the dead.

They lower'd him, with the sound
Of requiems, to repose,
When from the throngs around
A solemn voice arose :

"Forbear, forbear !" it cried,
"In the holiest name forbear !
He hath conquer'd regions wide,
But he shall not slumber *there*.

"By the violated hearth
Which made way for yon proud shrine,
By the harvests which this earth
Hath borne to me and mine ;

"By the home ev'n here o'erthrown,
On my children's native spot,—
Hence ! with his dark renown
Cumber our birthplace not !

"Will my sire's unransomed field
O'er which your censers wave,
To the buried spoiler yield
Soft slumber in the grave ?

"The tree before him fell
Which we cherish'd many a year,
But its deep root yet shall swell
And heave against his bier.

"The land that I have till'd,
Hath yet its brooding breast
With my home's white ashes fill'd—
And it shall not give him rest.

"Here each proud column's bed
Hath been wet by weeping eyes,—
Hence! and bestow your dead
Where no wrong against him cries!"

Shame glow'd on each dark face
Of those proud and steel-girt men,
And they bought with gold a place
For their leader's dust e'en then.

A little earth for him
Whose banner flew so far!
And a peasant's tale could dim
The name, a nation's star!

One deep voice thus arose
From a heart which wrongs had riven—
Oh! who shall number those
That were but heard in Heaven?*

THE SOUND OF THE SEA.

THOU art sounding on, thou mighty sea,
For ever and the same!
The ancient rocks yet ring to thee,
Whose thunders nought can tame.

"Oh! many a glorious voice is gone,
From the rich bowers of earth,
And hush'd is many a lovely one
Of mournfulness or mirth.

* For the particulars of this and other scarcely less remarkable circumstances which attended the obsequies of William the Conqueror, see Sismondi's "*Histoire des Français*," vol. iv. p. 480.

The Dorian flute that sigh'd of yore
Along thy wave, is still ;
The harp of Judah peals no more
On Zion's awful hill.

And Memnon's lyre hath lost the chord
That breathed the mystic tone,
And the songs, at Rome's high triumphs pour'd,
Are with her eagles flown.

And mute the Moorish horn, that rang
O'er stream and mountain free,
And the hymn the leagued Crusaders sang,
Hath died in Galilee.

But thou art swelling on, thou deep,
Through many an olden clime,
Thy billowy anthem, ne'er to sleep
Until the close of time.

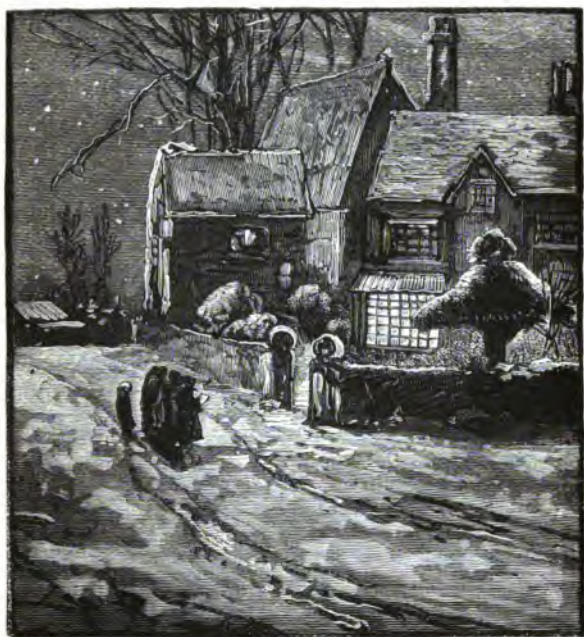
Thou liftest up thy solemn voice
To every wind and sky,
And all our earth's green shores rejoice
In that one harmony.

It fills the noontide's calm profound,
The sunset's heaven of gold ;
And the still midnight hears the sound,
Ev'n as when first it roll'd.

Let there be silence, deep and strange,
Where sceptred cities rose !
Thou speak'st of one who doth not change--
So may our hearts repose.

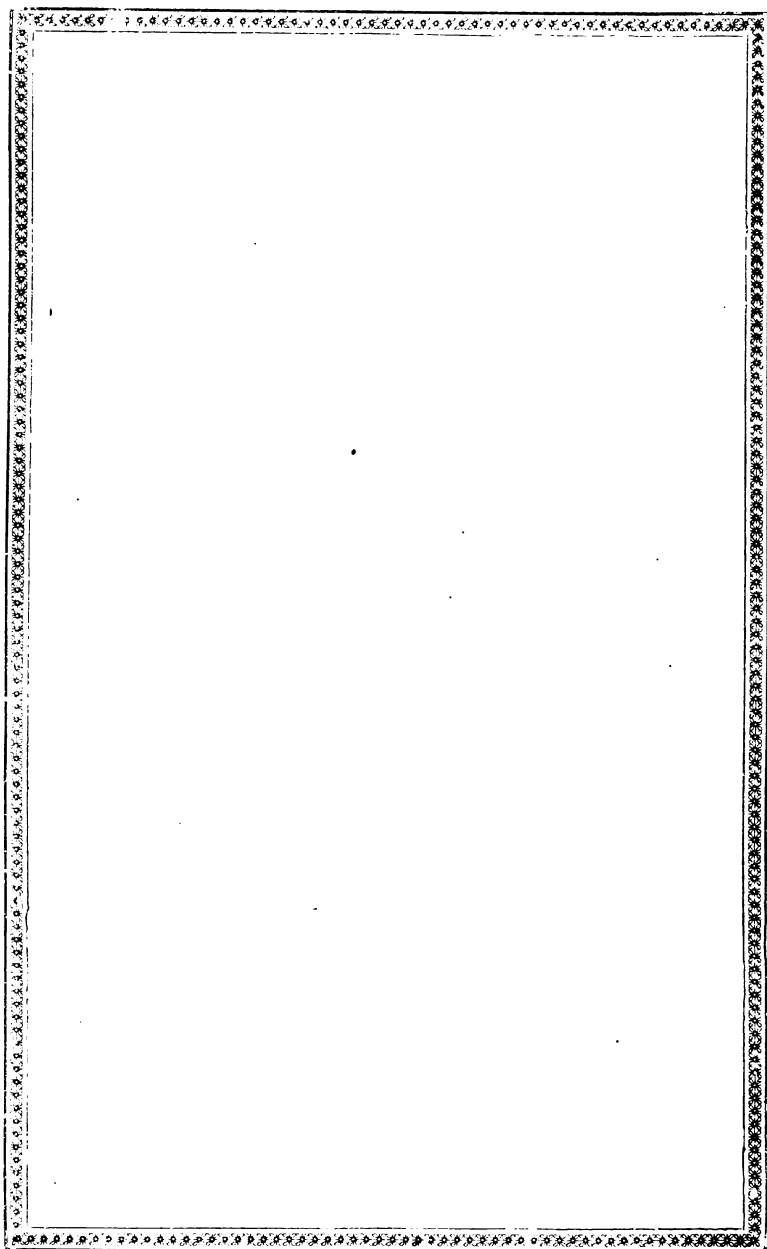
THE ADOPTED CHILD.

"WHY wouldst thou leave me, oh ! gentle child,
Thy home on the mountain is bleak and wild,
A straw-roof'd cabin with lowly wall—
Mine is a fair and pillar'd hall,
Where many an image of marble gleams,
And the sunshine of picture for ever streams."



"Oh! lovely voices of the sky
Which hymn'd the Saviour's birth."

[p. 224.]



"Oh ! green is the turf where my brothers play,
Through the long bright hours of the summer-day,
They find the red cup-moss where they climb,
And they chase the bee o'er the scented thyme ;
And the rocks where the heath-flower blooms they know --
Lady, kind lady ! oh ! let me go."

"Content thee, boy ! in my bower to dwell,
Here are sweet sounds which thou lovest well ;
Flutes on the air in the stilly noon,
Harps which the wandering breezes tune ;
And the silvery wood-note of many a bird,
Whose voice was ne'er in thy mountains heard."

"My mother sings, at the twilight's fall,
A song of the hills far more sweet than all ;
She sings it under our own green tree,
To the babe half slumbering on her knee ;
I dreamt last night of that music low—
Lady, kind lady ! oh ! let me go."

"Thy mother is gone from her cares to rest,
She hath taken the babe on her quiet breast ;
Thou wouldst meet her footstep, my boy, no more,
Nor hear her song at the cabin door.—
Come thou with me to the vineyards nigh,
And we'll pluck the grapes of the richest dye."

"Is my mother gone from her home away ?
—But I know that my brothers are there at play.
I know they are gathering the foxglove's bell,
Or the long fern-leaves by the sparkling well,
Or they launch their boats where the bright streams flow--
Lady, kind lady ! oh ! let me go."

"Fair child ! thy brothers are wanderers now,
They sport no more on the mountain's brow,
They have left the fern by the spring's green side,
And the streams where the fairy barks were tried.—
Be thou at peace in thy brighter lot,
For thy cabin-home is a lonely spot."

"Are they gone, all gone from the sunny hill ?—
But the bird and the blue-fly rove o'er it still,
And the red-deer bound in their gladness free,
And the turf is bent by the singing bee,
And the waters leap and the fresh winds blow—
Lady, kind lady ! oh ! let me go."

THE DEPARTED.

"Thou shalt lie down
With patriarchs of the infant world—with kings,
The powerful of the earth—the wise, the good,
Fair forms, and hoary seers of ages past,
All in one mighty sepulchre."

BRYANT.

AND shrink ye from the way
To the spirit's distant shore ?
Earth's mightiest men in arm'd array,
Are thither gone before.

The warrior kings, whose banner
Flew far as eagles fly,
They are gone where swords avail them not,
From the feast of victory.

And the seers, who sat of yore
By orient palm or wave,
They have pass'd with all their starry lore . -
Can ye still fear the grave ?—

We fear, we fear !—the sunshine
Is joyous to behold,
And we reck not of the buried kings,
Or the awful seers of old.

Ye shrink ?—the bards whose lays
Have made your deep hearts burn,
They have left the sun, and the voice of praise,
For the land whence none return :

And the lovely, whose memorial
Is the verse that cannot die,
They too are gone with their glorious bloom,
From the gaze of human eye.

Would ye not join that throng
Of the earth's departed flowers,
And the masters of the mighty song
In their far and fadeless bowers ?

Those songs are high and holy,
But they vanquish not our fear ;
Not from *our* path those flowers are gone—
We fain would linger here !

Linger then yet awhile,
—As the last leaves on the bough !
Ye have loved the gleam of many a smile
That is taken from you now.

There have been sweet singing voices
In your walks that now are still ;
There are seats left void in your earthly homes,
Which none again may fill.

Soft eyes are seen no more
That made spring-time in your heart ;
Kindred and friends are gone before,—
And *ye* still fear to part ?—

We fear not now, we fear not !
Though the way through darkness bends ;
Our souls are strong to follow *them*,
Our own familiar friends !

CASABIANCA.*

THE boy stood on the burning deck
Whence all but he had fled ;
The flame that lit the battle's wreck
Shone round him o'er the dead.

Yet beautiful and bright he stood,
As born to rule the storm—
A creature of heroic blood,
A proud, though child-like form.

* Young Casabianca, a boy about thirteen years old, son to the Admiral of the Orient, remained at his post (in the Battle of the Nile) after the ship had taken fire, and all the guns had been abandoned ; and perished in the explosion of the vessel, when the flames had reached the powder.

The flames roll'd on—he would not go
Without his father's word ;
That father, faint in death below,
His voice no longer heard.

He call'd aloud :—" Say, father ! say
If yet my task is done ! "
He knew not that the chieftain lay
Unconscious of his son.

" Speak, father ! " once again he cried,
" If I may yet be gone ! "
And but the booming shots replied,
And fast the flames roll'd on.

Upon his brow he felt their breath,
And in his waving hair,
And look'd from that lone post of death
In still yet brave despair ;

And shouted but once more aloud,
" My father ! must I stay ? "
While o'er him fast, through sail and shroud,
The wreathing fires made way.

They wrapt the ship in splendour wild,
They caught the flag on high,
And stream'd above the gallant child
Like banners in the sky.

There came a burst of thunder-sound—
The boy—oh ! where was he ?
Ask of the winds that far around
With fragments strew'd the sea !—

With mast, and helm, and pennon fair,
That well had borne their part ;
But the noblest thing which perish'd there
Was that young faithful heart !

TO ONE OF THE AUTHOR'S CHILDREN

ON HIS BIRTHDAY, 27 AUGUST, 1825.

THOU wak'st from happy sleep to play
With bounding heart, my boy !
Before thee lies a long bright day
Of summer and of joy.

Thou hast no heavy thought or dream
To cloud thy fearless eye ;—
Long be it thus—life's early stream
Should still reflect the sky.

Yet ere the cares of life lie dim
On thy young spirit's wings,
Now in thy morn forget not Him
From whom each pure thought springs !

So in the onward vale of tears,
Where'er thy path may be,
When strength hath bow'd to evil years—
He will remember thee.

TO A YOUNGER CHILD

ON A SIMILAR OCCASION, 17 SEPTEMBER, 1825.

WHERE sucks the bee now ?—Summer is flying,
Leaves on the grass-plot faded are lying ;
Violets are gone from the grassy dell,
With the cowslip-cups, where the fairies dwell ;
The rose from the garden hath pass'd away—
Yet happy, fair boy ! is thy natal day.

For love bids it welcome, the love which hath smiled
Ever around thee, my gentle child !
Watching thy footsteps, and guarding thy bed,
And pouring out joy on thy sunny head.
Roses may vanish, but this will stay—
Happy and bright is thy natal day.

AN HOUR OF ROMANCE.

THERE were thick leaves above me and around,
 And low sweet sighs, like those of childhood's sleep,
 Amidst their dimness, and a fitful sound
 As of soft showers on water—dark and deep
 Lay the oak shadows o'er the turf, so still,
 They seem'd but pictured gloom—a hidden rill,
 Made music, such as haunts us in a dream,
 Under the fern-tufts ; and a tender gleam
 Of soft green light, as by the glow-worm shed,
 Came pouring through the woven beech-boughs down,
 And steep'd the magic page wherein I read
 Of royal chivalry and old renown,
 A tale of Palestine.*—Meanwhile the bee
 Swept past me with a tone of summer hours,
 A drowsy bugle, wafting thoughts of flowers,
 Blue skies, and amber sunshine—brightly free,
 On filmy wings the purple dragon-fly
 Shot glancing like a fairy javelin by !
 And a sweet voice of sorrow told the dell
 Where sat the lone wood-pigeon.

But ere long,
 All sense of these things faded, as the spell,
 Breathing from that high gorgeous tale, grew strong
 On my chain'd soul—'twas not the leaves I heard;—
 A Syrian wind the lion-banner stirr'd,
 Through its proud floating folds—'twas not the brook,
 Singing in secret through its grassy glen—
 A wild shrill trumpet of the Saracen
 Peal'd from the desert's lonely heart and shook
 The burning air.—Like clouds when winds are high,
 O'er glittering sands flew steeds of Araby,
 And tents rose up, and sudden lance and spear
 Flash'd where a fountain's diamond wave lay clear,
 Shadow'd by graceful palm-trees.—Then the shout
 Of merry England's joy swell'd freely out,
 Sent through an Eastern heaven, whose glorious hue
 Made shields dark mirrors to its depths of blue ;
 And harps were there—I heard their sounding strings,
 As the waste echoed to the mirth of kings.

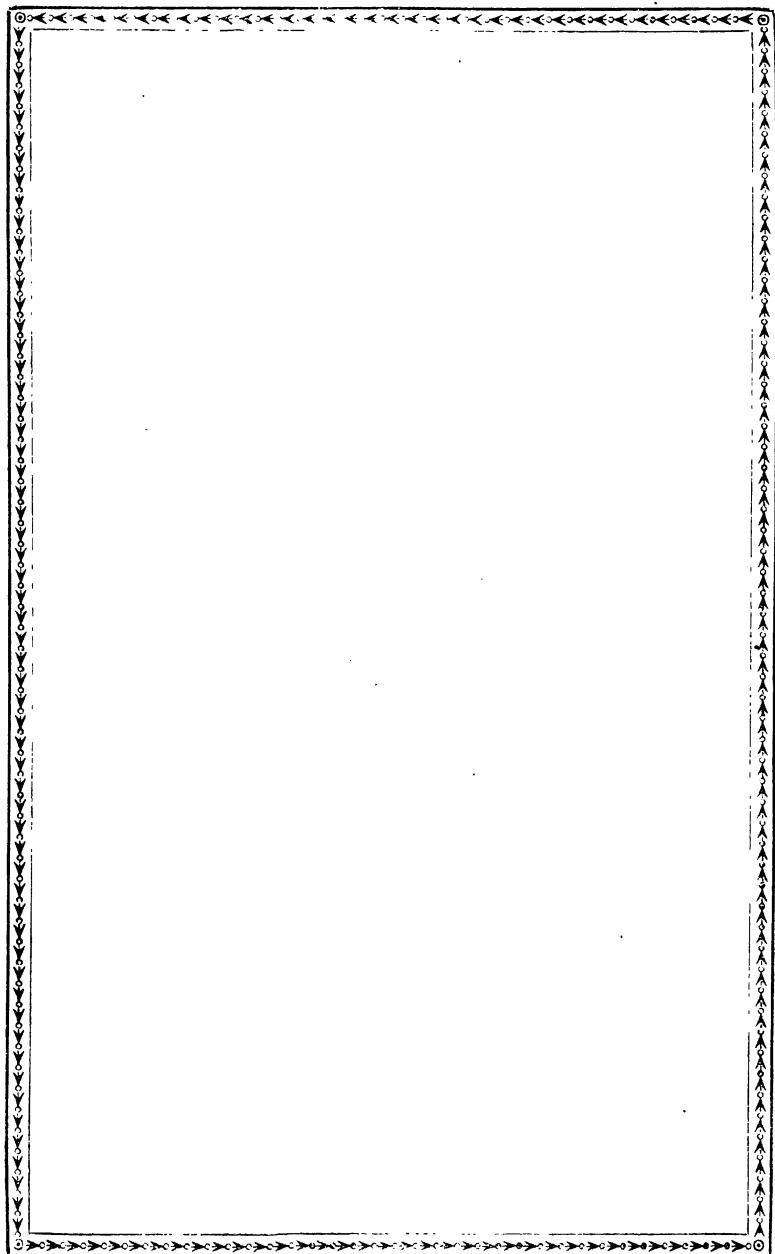
* "The Talisman—Tales of the Crusaders."



"... the magic page wherein I read
Of royal chivalry and old renown."

[p. 240.]

R



The bright masque faded—unto life's worn track
What call'd me, from its flood of glory, back ?—
A voice of happy childhood !—and they pass'd,
Banner, and harp, and Paynim trumpet's blast—
Yet might I scarce bewail the vision gone,
My heart so leapt to that sweet laughter's tone.

THE INVOCATION.

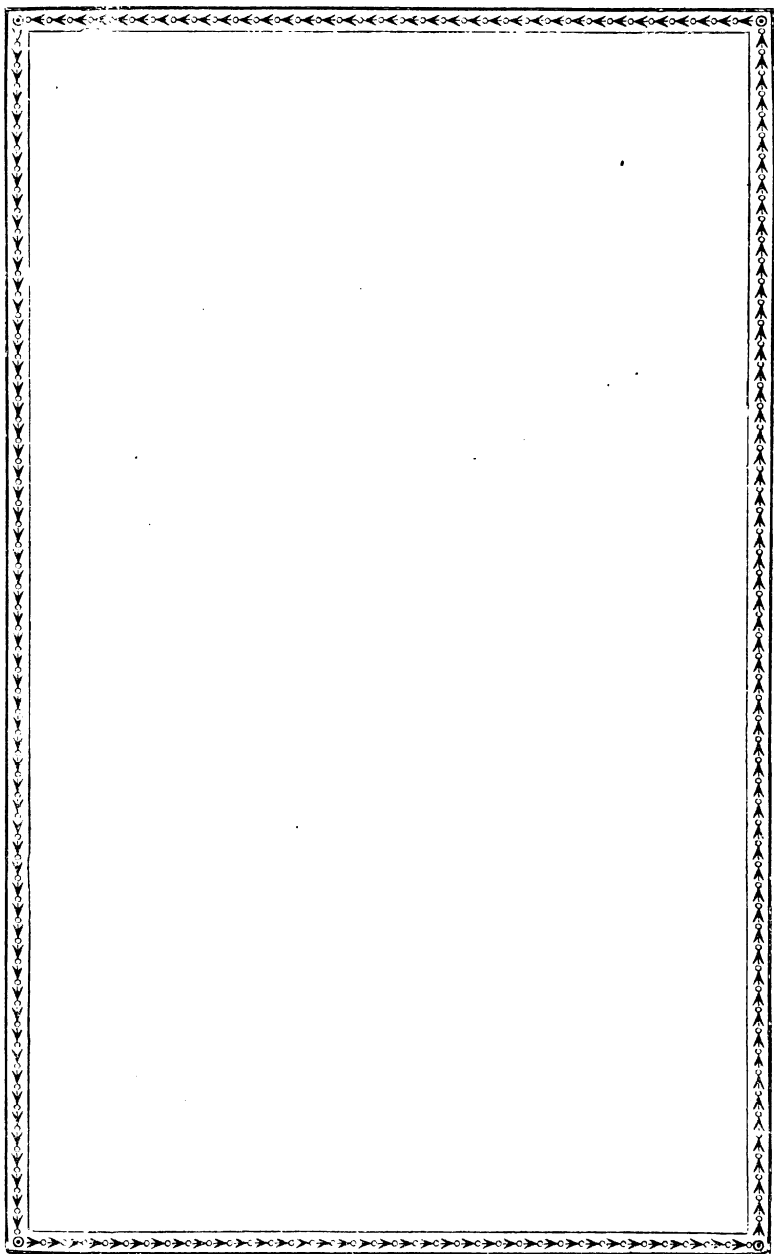
WRITTEN AFTER THE DEATH OF A SISTER-IN-LAW.

ANSWER me, burning stars of night !
Where is the spirit gone,
That past the reach of human sight,
Even as a breeze, hath flown ?—
And the stars answer'd me—"We roll
In light and power on high,
But, of the never-dying soul,
Ask things that cannot die !"

Oh ! many-toned and chainless wind !
Thou art a wanderer free ;
Tell me if *thou* its place canst find,
Far over mount and sea ?—
And the wind murmur'd in reply,
"The blue deep I have cross'd,
And met its barks and billows high,
But not what thou hast lost !"

Ye clouds that gorgeously repose
Around the setting sun,
Answer ! have ye a home for those
Whose earthly race is run ?
The bright clouds answer'd—"We depart,
We vanish from the sky ;
Ask what is deathless in the heart
For that which cannot die !"

Speak, then, thou voice of God within !
Thou of the deep low tone !
Answer me, through life's restless din,
Where is the spirit flown ?—
And the voice answer'd—"Be thou still !
Enough to know is given ;
Clouds, winds, and stars *their* task fulfil,
Thine is to trust to Heaven !"



THE VESPERS OF PALERMO:

A TRAGEDY.

IN FIVE ACTS.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

—o—

COUNT DI PROCIDA.
RAIMOND DI PROCIDA, *his Son.*
ERIBERT, *Viceroy.*
DE COUCL.
MONTALBA.
GUIDO.
ALBERTI.
ANSELMO, *a Monk.*

VITTORIA.
CONSTANCE, *Sister to Eribert.*

Nobles, Soldiers, Messengers, Vassals, Peasants, &c. &c.

— — —
SCENE—PALERMO.



THE VESPERS OF PALERMO :

A TRAGEDY.



ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.—*A Valley, with Vineyards and Cottages.*

Groups of Peasants—PROCIDA, disguised as a Pilgrim, amongst them.

First Peas. Aye, this was wont to be festal time
In days gone by ! I can remember well
The old familiar melodies that rose
At break of morn, from all our purple hills,
To welcome in the vintage. Never since
Hath music seem'd so sweet ! But the light hearts
Which to those measures beat so joyously
Are tamed to stillness now. There is no voice
Of joy through all the land.

Second Peas. Yes ! there are sounds
Of revelry within the palaces,
And the fair castles of our ancient lords,
Where now the stranger banquets. Ye may hear
From *thence* the peals of song and laughter rise
At midnight's deepest hour.

Third Peas. Alas ! we sat
In happier days, so peacefully beneath
The olives and the vines our fathers rear'd,
Encircled by our children, whose quick steps
Flew by us in the dance ! The time hath been
When peace was in the hamlet, wheresoe'er

The storm might gather. But this yoke of France
Falls on the peasant's neck as heavily
As on the crested chieftain's. We are bow'd
E'en to the earth.

Peas.'s Child. My father, tell me when
Shall the gay dance and song again resound
Amidst our chestnut-woods, as in those days
Of which thou'rt wont to tell the joyous tale?

First Peas. When there are light and reckless hearts once more
In Sicily's green vales. Alas ! my boy,
Men meet not now to quaff the flowing bowl,
To hear the mirthful song, and cast aside
The weight of work-day care :—they meet, to speak
Of wrongs and sorrows, and to whisper thoughts
They dare not breathe aloud.

Pro. (from the back-ground). Aye, it is well
So to relieve th' o'erburden'd heart, which pants
Beneath its weight of wrongs ; but better far
In silence to avenge them.

An old Peas. What deep voice
Came with that startling tone ?

First Peas. It was our guest's,
The stranger pilgrim, who hath sojourn'd here
Since yester-morn. Good neighbours, mark him well ;
He hath a stately bearing, and an eye
Whose glance looks through the heart. His mien accords
Ill with such vestments. How he folds round him
His pilgrim-cloak, e'en as it were a robe
Of knightly ermine ! That commanding step
Should have been used in courts and camps to move.
Mark him !

Old Peas. Nay, rather, mark him not : the times
Are fearful, and they teach the boldest hearts
A cautious lesson. What should bring him here ?

A Youth. He spoke of vengeance !

Old Peas. Peace ! we are beset
By snares on every side, and we must learn
In silence and in patience to endure.
Talk not of vengeance, for the word is death.

Pro. (coming forward indignantly). The word is death ! And
what hath life for thee,
That thou shouldst cling to it thus ? thou abject thing !
Whose very soul is moulded to the yoke,
And stamp'd with servitude. What ! is it life,
Thus at a breeze to start, to school thy voice
Into low fearful whispers, and to cast
Pale jealous looks around thee, lest, e'en then,

Strangers should catch its echo?—Is there aught
In *this* so precious, that thy furrow'd cheek
Is blanch'd with terror at the passing thought
Of hazarding some few and evil days,
Which drag thus poorly on?

Some of the Peas. Away, away!

Leave us, for there is danger in thy presence.

Pro. Why, what is danger?—Are there deeper ills
Than those ye bear thus calmly? Ye have drain'd
The cup of bitterness, till nought remains
To fear or shrink from—therefore, be ye strong!
Power dwelleth with despair.—Why start ye thus
At words which are but echoes of the thoughts
Lock'd in your secret souls?—Full well I know,
There is not one amongst you, but hath nursed
Some proud indignant feeling, which doth make
One conflict of his life. I know *thy* wrongs,
And thine—and thine,—but if within your breasts,
There is no chord that vibrates to *my* voice,
Then fare ye well.

A youth (coming forward). No, no! say on, say on!
There are still free and fiery hearts e'en here,
That kindle at thy words.

Peas. If that indeed
Thou hast a hope to give us.

Pro. There is hope
For all who suffer with indignant thoughts
Which work in silent strength. What! think ye Heaven
O'erlooks th' oppressor, if he bear awhile
His crested head on high?—I tell you, no!
Th' avenger will not sleep. It was an hour
Of triumph to the conqueror, when our king,
Our young brave Conradin, in life's fair morn,
On the red scaffold died. Yet not the less
Is justice throned above; and her good time
Comes rushing on in storms: that royal blood
Hath lifted an accusing voice from earth,
And hath been heard. The traces of the past
Fade in *man's* heart, but ne'er doth Heaven forget.

Peas. Had we but arms and leaders, we are men
Who might earn vengeance yet; but wanting these,
What wouldst thou have us do?

Peas. Be vigilant;
And when the signal wakes the land, arise!
The peasant's arm is strong, and there shall be
A rich and noble harvest. Fare ye well. [*Exit PROCIDA.*]

First Peas. This man should be a prophet: how he seem'd

The Vespers of Palermo.

To read our hearts with his dark searching glance
And aspect of command ! And yet his garb
Is mean as ours.

Second Peas. Speak low ; I know him well.
At first his voice disturb'd me like a dream
Of other days ; but I remember now
His form, seen oft when in my youth I served
Beneath the banners of our kings. 'Tis he
Who hath been exiled and proscribed so long,
The Count di Procida.

Peas. And is this he ?
Then Heaven protect him ! for around his steps
Will many snares be set.

First Peas. He comes not thus
But with some mighty purpose ; doubt it not :
Perchance to bring us freedom. He is one
Whose faith, through many a trial, hath been proved
True to our native princes. But away !
The noon-tide heat is past, and from the seas
Light gales are wandering through the vineyards ; now
We may resume our toil. [Exeunt PEASANTS.

SCENE II.—*The Terrace of a Castle.*

ERIBERT. VITTORIA.

Vit. Have I not told thee, that I bear a heart
Blighted and cold ?—Th' affections of my youth
Lie slumbering in the grave ; their fount is closed,
And all the soft and playful tenderness
Which hath its home in woman's breast, ere yet
Deep wrongs have sear'd it ; all is fled from mine.
Urge me no more.

Erib. O lady ! doth the flower
That sleeps entomb'd through the long wintry storms
Unfold its beauty to the breath of spring ;
And shall not woman's heart, from chill despair,
Wake at love's voice ?

Vit. Love !—make *love's* name thy spell,
And I am strong !—the very word calls up
From the dark past, thoughts, feelings, powers, array'd
In arms against thee !—Know'st thou *whom* I loved,
While my soul's dwelling place was still on earth ?
One who was born for empire, and endow'd
With such high gifts of princely majesty,

As bow'd all hearts before him !—Was he not
Brave, royal, beautiful ?—And such he died ;
He died !—hast thou forgotten ?—And thou'rt here,
Thou meet'st my glance with eyes which coldly look'd,--
Coldly !—nay, rather with triumphant gaze,
Upon his murder !—Desolate as I am,
Yet in the mien of *thine* affianced bride,
Oh, my lost Conradin ! there should be still
Somewhat of loftiness, which might o'erawe
The hearts of thine assassins.

Erib. Haughty dame !

If thy proud heart to tenderness be closed,
Know, danger is around thee : thou hast foes
That seek thy ruin, and my power alone
Can shield thee from their arts.

Vit. Provençal, tell

Thy tale of danger to some happy heart,
Which hath its little world of loved ones round,
For whom to tremble ; and its tranquil joys
That make earth, Paradise. I stand alone ;—
They that are blest may fear.

Erib. Is there not one

Who ne'er commands in vain ?—proud lady, bend
Thy spirit to thy fate ; for know that he,
Whose car of triumph in its earthquake path
O'er the bow'd neck of prostrate Sicily,
Hath borne him to dominion ; he, my king,
Charles of Anjou, decrees thy hand the boon
My deeds have well deserved ; and who hath power
Against his mandates ?

Vit. Viceroy, tell thy lord,

That e'en where chains lie heaviest on the land,
Souls may not all be fetter'd. Oft, ere now,
Conquerors have rock'd the earth, yet fail'd to tame
Unto their purposes that restless fire
Inhabiting man's breast. A spark bursts forth,
And so they perish !—'tis the fate of those
Who sport with lightning—and it may be his.
Tell him I fear him not, and thus am free.

Erib. 'Tis well. Then nerve that lofty heart to bear
The wrath which is not powerless. Yet again
Bethink thee, lady !—Love may change—*hath* chang'd
To vigilant hatred oft, whose sleepless eye
Still finds what most it seeks for. Fare thee well.—
Look to it yet !—To-morrow I return. [*Exit ERIBERT.*]

Vit. To-morrow !—Some ere now have slept, and dreamt
Of morrows which ne'er dawn'd—or ne'er for them ;

So silently their deep and still repose
 Hath melted into death!—Are there not balms
 In nature's boundless realm, to pour out sleep
 Like this, on me?—Yet should my spirit still
 Endure its earthly bonds, till it could bear
 To *his* a glorious tale of his own isle,
 Free and avenged.—*Thou* should'st be now at work,
 In wrath, my native Etna! who dost lift
 Thy spiry pillar of dark smoke so high,
 Through the red heaven of sunset!—sleep'st thou still,
 With all thy founts of fire, while spoilers tread
 The glowing vales beneath?

(PROCIDA enters disguised.)

Ha! who art thou,
 Unbidden guest, that with so mute a step
 Dost steal upon me?

Pro. One, o'er whom hath pass'd
 All that can change man's aspect!—Yet not long
 Shalt thou find safety in forgetfulness.—
 I am he, to breathe whose name is perilous,
 Unless thy wealth could bribe the winds to silence.—
 Know'st thou *this*, lady? [He shows a ring.]

Vit. Righteous Heaven! the Pledge
 Amidst his people from the scaffold thrown
 By him who perish'd, and whose kingly blood
 E'en yet is unatoned.—My heart beats high—
 Oh, welcome, welcome! thou art Procida,
 Th' Avenger, the Deliverer!

Pro. Call me so
 When my great task is done. Yet who can tell
 If the return'd *be* welcome?—Many a heart
 Is changed since last we met.

Vit. Why dost thou gaze,
 With such a still and solemn earnestness,
 Upon my alter'd mien?

Pro. That I may read
 If to the widow'd love of Conradin,
 Or the proud Eribert's triumphant bride,
 I now entrust my fate.

Vit. Thou, Procida!
 That *thou* shouldst wrong me thus!—Prolong thy gaze
 Till it hath found an answer.

Pro. 'Tis enough.
 I find it in thy cheek, whose rapid change
 Is from death's hue to fever's; in the wild

Unsettled brightness of thy proud dark eye,
And in thy wasted form. Aye, 'tis a deep
And solemn joy, thus in thy looks to trace,
Instead of youth's gay bloom, the characters
Of noble suffering ;—on thy brow the same
Commanding spirit holds its native state
Which could not stoop to vileness. Yet the voice
Of Fame hath told afar that thou shouldst wed
This tyrant, Eribert.

Vit. And told it not
A tale of insolent love repell'd with scorn,
Of stern commands and fearful menaces
Met with indignant courage?—*Procida!*
It was but now that haughtily I braved
His sovereign's mandate, which decrees my hand,
With its fair appanage of wide domains
And wealthy vassals, a most fitting boon,
To recompense his crimes.—I smiled—aye, smiled—
In proud security! for the high of heart
Have still a pathway to escape disgrace,
Though it be dark and lone.

Pro. Thou shalt not need
To tread its shadowy mazes. Trust my words :
I tell thee, that a spirit is abroad,
Which will not slumber till its path be traced
By deeds of fearful fame. *Vittoria*, live!
It is most meet that thou *shouldst* live to see
The mighty expiation ; for thy heart
(Forgive me that I wrong'd its faith) hath nursed
A high, majestic grief, whose seal is set
Deep on thy marble brow.

Vit. Then thou *canst* tell
By gazing on the wither'd rose, that there
Time, or the blight, hath work'd!—Aye, this is in
Thy vision's scope: but oh! the things unseen,
Untold, undreamt of, which like shadows pass
Hourly o'er that mysterious world, a mind
To ruin struck by grief!—Yet doth my soul,
Far, 'midst its darkness, nurse one soaring hope,
Wherein is bright vitality.—'Tis to see
His blood avenged, and his fair heritage,
My beautiful native land, in glory risen,
Like a warrior from his slumbers!

Pro. Hear'st thou not
With what a deep and ominous moan, the voice
Of our great mountain swells?—There will be soon
A fearful burst!—*Vittoria!* brood no more

In silence o'er thy sorrows, but go forth
 Amidst thy vassals (yet be secret still),
 And let thy breath give nurture to the spark
 Thou'lt find already kindled. I move on
 In shadow, yet awakening in my path
 That which shall startle nations. Fare thee well.

Vit. When shall we meet again?—Are we not those
 Whom most he loved on earth, and think'st thou not
 That love e'en yet shall bring his spirit near
 While thus we hold communion?

Pro. Yes, I feel

Its breathing influence whilst I look on thee,
 Who wert its light in life. Yet will we not
 Make womanish tears our offering on his tomb;
 He shall have nobler tribute!—I must hence,
 But thou shalt soon hear more. Await the time.

[*Exeunt separately.*]

SCENE III.—*The Sea Shore.*

RAIMOND DI PROCIDA. CONSTANCE.

Con. There is a shadow far within your eye,
 Which hath of late been deepening. You were wont
 Upon the clearness of your open brow
 To wear a brighter spirit, shedding round
 Joy, like our southern sun. It is not well,
 If some dark thought be gathering o'er your soul,
 To hide it from affection. Why is this,
 My Raimond, why is this?

Rai. Oh! from the dreams
 Of youth, sweet Constance, hath not manhood still
 A wide and stormy wakening?—They depart;
 Light after light, our glorious visions fade,
 The vaguely beautiful! till earth, unveil'd,
 Lies pale around; and life's realities
 Press on the soul, from its unfathom'd depth
 Rousing the fiery feelings, and proud thoughts,
 In all their fearful strength!—'Tis ever thus,
 And doubly so with me; for I awoke
 With high aspirings, making it a curse
 To breathe where noble minds are bow'd, as her
 To breathe!—it is not breath!

Con. I know thy grief,—
 And is 't not mine?—for those devoted men

Doom'd with their life to expiate some wild word,
Born of the social hour. Oh ! I have knelt,
E'en at my brother's feet, with fruitless tears,
Imploring him to spare. His heart is shut
Against my voice ; yet will I not forsake
The cause of mercy.

Rai. Waste not thou thy prayers,
Oh, gentle love, for them. There 's little need
For Pity, though the galling chain be worn
By some few slaves the less. Let them depart !
There is a world beyond th' oppressor's reach,
And thither lies their way.

Con. Alas ! I see
That some new wrong hath pierced you to the soul.

Rai. Pardon, beloved Constance, if my words,
From feelings hourly stung, have caught, perchance,
A tone of bitterness.—Oh ! when thine eyes,
With their sweet eloquent thoughtfulness, are fix'd
Thus tenderly on mine, I should forget
All else in their soft beams ; and yet I came
To tell thee—

Con. What ? What wouldst thou say ? O speak !—
Thou wouldst not leave me !

Rai. I have cast a cloud,
The shadow of dark thoughts and ruin'd fortunes,
O'er thy bright spirit. Haply, were I gone,
Thou wouldst resume thyself, and dwell once more
In the clear sunny light of youth and joy,
E'en as before we met—before we loved !

Con. This is but mockery.—Well thou know'st thy love
Hath given me nobler being ; made my heart
A home for all the deep sublimities
Of strong affection ; and I would not change
Th' exalted life I draw from that pure source,
With all its chequer'd hues of hope and fear,
Ev'n for the brightest calm. Thou most unkind !
Have I deserved this ?

Rai. Oh ! thou hast deserved
A love less fatal to thy peace than mine.
Think not 'tis mockery !—But I cannot rest
To be the scorn'd and trampled thing I am
In this degraded land. Its very skies,
That smile as if but festivals were held
Beneath their cloudless azure, weigh me down
With a dull sense of bondage, and I pine
For freedom's charter'd air. I would go forth
To seek my noble father ; he hath been

Too long a lonely exile, and his name
Seems fading in the dim obscurity
Which gathers round my fortunes.

Con. Must we part?

And is it come to this?—Oh! I have still
Deem'd it enough of joy with *thee* to share
E'en grief itself—and now—but this is vain;
Alas! too deep, too fond, is woman's love,
Too full of hope, she casts on troubled waves
The treasures of her soul!

Rai. Oh, speak not thus!

Thy gentle and desponding tones fall cold
Upon my inmost heart.—I leave thee but
To be more worthy of a love like thine.
For I have dreamt of fame!—A few short years,
And we may yet be blest.

Con. A few short years!

Less time may well suffice for death and fate
To work all change on earth!—To break the ties
Which early love had form'd; and to bow down
Th' elastic spirit, and to blight each flower
Strewn in life's crowded path!—But be it so!
Be it enough to know that happiness
Meets thee on other shores.

Rai. Where'er I roam

Thou shalt be with my soul!—Thy soft low voice
Shall rise upon remembrance, like a strain
Of music heard in boyhood, bringing back
Life's morning freshness.—Oh! that there should be
Things, which we love with such deep tenderness,
But, through that love, to learn how much of woe
Dwells in one hour like this!—Yet weep thou not!
We shall meet soon; and many days, dear love,
Ere I depart.

Con. Then there's a respite still.

Days!—not a day but in its course may bring
Some strange vicissitude to turn aside
Th' impending blow we shrink from. Fare thee well.

(*Returning.*)

Oh, Raimond! this is not our *last* farewell?
Thou wouldst not so deceive me?

Rai. Doubt me not,
Gentlest and best beloved! we meet again.

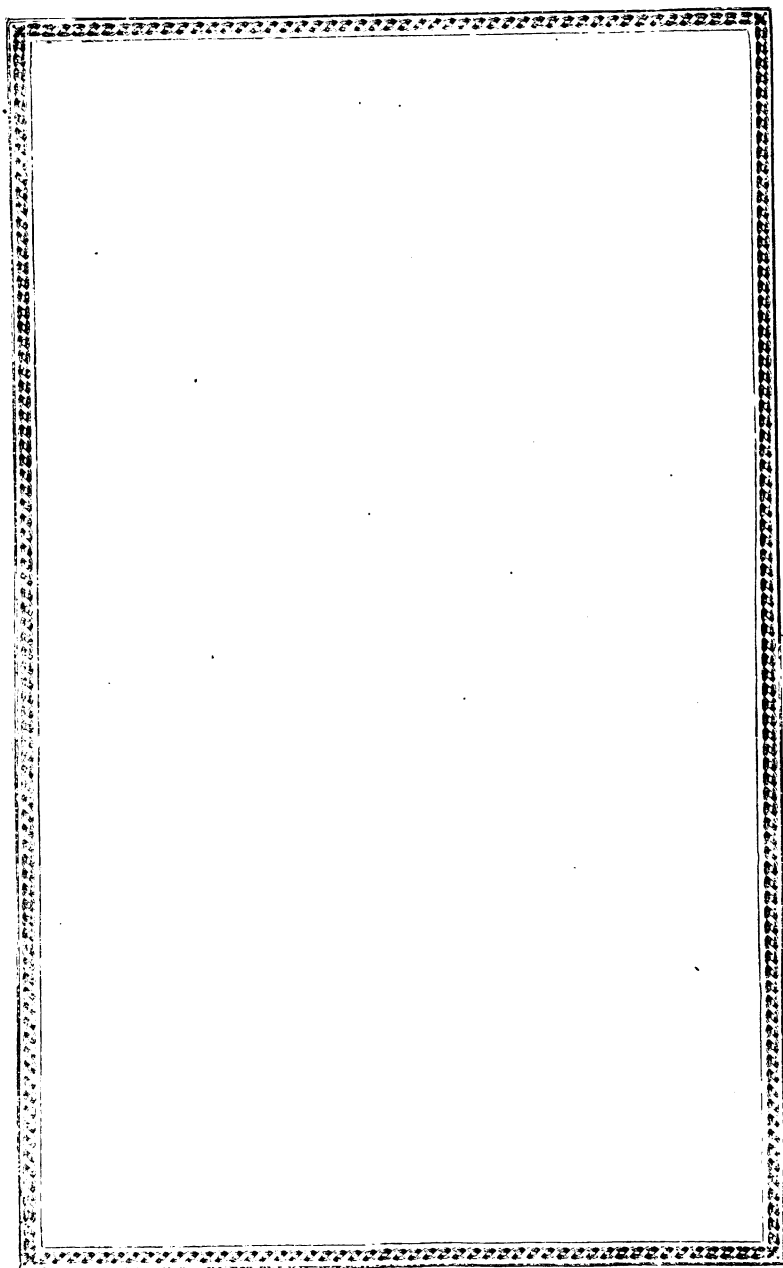
[*Exit* CONSTANCE.

Rai. (*after a pause*). When shall I breathe in freedom, and
give scope



" A few short years,
And we may yet be blest."

[A. 256.



To those untameable and burning thoughts,
And restless aspirations, which consume
My heart i' th' land of bondage ?—Oh ! with you,
Ye everlasting images of power,
And of infinity ! thou blue-rolling deep,
And you, ye stars ! whose beams are characters
Wherewith the oracles of fate are traced ;
With you my soul finds room, and casts aside
The weight that doth oppress her.—But my thoughts
Are wandering far ; there should be one to share
This awful and majestic solitude
Of sea and heaven with me.

(PROCIDA enters unobserved.)

It is the hour

He named, and yet he comes not.

Pro. (*coming forward*). He is here.

Rai. Now, thou mysterious stranger, thou, whose glance
Doth fix itself on memory, and pursue
Thought, like a spirit, haunting its lone hours ;
Reveal thyself ; what art thou ?

Pro. One, whose life
Has been a troubled stream, and made its way
Through rocks and darkness, and a thousand storms,
With still a mighty aim.—But now the shades
Of eve are gathering round me, and I come
To this, my native land, that I may rest
Beneath its vines in peace.

Rai. Seek'st thou for peace ?
This is no land of peace ; unless that deep
And voiceless terror, which doth freeze men's thoughts
Back to their source, and mantle its pale mien
With a dull hollow semblance of repose,
May so be call'd.

Pro. There are such calms full oft
Preceding earthquakes. But I have not been
So vainly school'd by fortune, and inured
To shape my course on peril's dizzy brink,
That it should irk my spirit to put on
Such guise of hush'd submissiveness as best
May suit the troubled aspect of the times.

Rai. Why, then, thou art welcome, stranger ! to the land
Where most disguise is needful.—He were bold
Who now should wear his thoughts upon his brow
Beneath Sicilian skies. The brother's eye
Doth search distrustfully the brother's face ;
And friends, whose undivided lives have drawn

From the same past their long remembrances,
 Now meet in terror, or no more ; lest hearts
 Full to o'erflowing, in their social hour,
 Should pour out some rash word, which roving winds
 Might whisper to our conquerors.—This it is,
 To wear a foreign yoke.

Pro. It matters not
 To him who holds the mastery o'er his spirit,
 And can suppress its workings, till endurance
 Becomes as nature. We can tame ourselves
 To all extremes, and there is that in life
 To which we cling with most tenacious grasp,
 Ev'n when its lofty claims are all reduced
 To the poor common privilege of breathing.—
 Why dost thou turn away ?

Rai. What wouldst thou with me ?
 I deem'd thee, by th' ascendant soul which lived,
 And made its throne on thy commanding brow,
 One of a sovereign nature, which would scorn
 So to abase its high capacities
 For aught on earth.—But thou art like the rest.
 What wouldst thou with me ?

Pro. I would counsel thee.
 Thou must do that which men—aye, valiant men,—
 Hourly submit to do ; in the proud court,
 And in the stately camp, and at the board
 Of midnight revellers, whose flush'd mirth is all
 A strife, won hardly.—Where is he whose heart
 Lies bare, through all its foldings, to the gaze
 Of mortal eye ?—If vengeance wait the foe,
 Or fate th' oppressor, 'tis in depths conceal'd
 Beneath a smiling surface.—Youth ! I say
 Keep thy soul down !—Put on a mask !—'tis worn
 Alike by power and weakness, and the smooth
 And specious intercourse of life requires
 Its aid in every scene.

Rai. Away, dissembler !
 Life hath its high and its ignoble tasks,
 Fitted to every nature. Will the free
 And royal eagle stoop to learn the arts
 By which the serpent wins his spell-bound prey ?
 It is because I *will* not clothe myself
 In a vile garb of coward semblances,
 That now, e'en now, I struggle with my heart,
 To bid what most I love a long farewell,
 And seek my country on some distant shore
 Where such things are unknown !

Pro. (exultingly). Why, this is joy !
After long conflict with the doubts and fears,
And the poor subtleties of meaner minds,
To meet a spirit whose bold elastic wing
Oppression hath not crush'd.—High-hearted youth !
Thy father, should his footsteps e'er again
Visit these shores—

Rai. My father ! what of him ?
Speak ! was he known to thee ?

Pro. In distant lands
With him I've traversed many a wild, and look'd
On many a danger ; and the thought that thou
Wert smiling then in peace, a happy boy,
Oft through the storm hath cheer'd him.

Rai. Dost thou deem
That still he lives ?—Oh ! if it be in chains,
In woe, in poverty's obscurest cell,
Say but he lives—and I will track his steps
E'en to the earth's verge !

Pro. It may be that he lives ;
Though long his name hath ceased to be a word
Familiar in man's dwellings. But its sound
May yet be heard !—Raimond di Procida,—
Rememberest thou thy father ?

Rai. From my mind
His form hath faded long, for years have pass'd
Since he went forth to exile : but a vague,
Yet powerful, image of deep majesty,
Still dimly gathering round each thought of him,
Doth claim instinctive reverence ; and my love
For his inspiring name hath long become
Part of my being.

Pro. Raimond ! doth no voice
Speak to thy soul, and tell thee whose the arms
That would enfold thee now ?—My son : my son !

Rai. Father !—Oh God !—my father ! Now I know
Why my heart woke before thee !

Pro. Oh ! this hour
Makes hope reality ; for thou art all
My dreams had pictured thee !

Rai. Yet why so long,
Ev'n as a stranger, hast thou cross'd my paths,
One nameless and unknown ?—and yet I felt
Each pulse within me thrilling to thy voice.

Pro. Because I would not link thy fate with mine,
Till I could hail the day-spring of that hope
Which now is gathering round us.—Listen, youth !

Thou hast told *me* of a subdued, and scorn'd,
And trampled land, whose very soul is bow'd
And fashion'd to her chains :—but *I* tell *thee*
Of a most generous and devoted land,
A land of kindling energies ; a land
Of glorious recollections !—proudly true
To the high memory of her ancient kings,
And rising, in majestic scorn, to cast
Her alien bondage off !

Rai. And where is this ?

Pro. Here, in our isle, our own fair Sicily !
Her spirit is awake, and moving on,
In its deep silence, mightier, to regain
Her place amongst the nations ; and the hour
Of that tremendous effort is at hand.

Rai. Can it be thus indeed ?—Thou pour'st new life
Through all my burning veins !—I am as one
Awakening from a chill and death-like sleep
To the full glorious day.

Pro. Thou shalt hear more !
Thou shalt hear things which would,—which *will* arouse
The proud, free spirits of our ancestors
E'en from their marble rest. Yet mark me well !
Be secret !—for along my destined path
I yet must darkly move.—Now, follow me ;
And join a band of men in whose high hearts
There lies a nation's strength.

Rai. My noble father !
Thy words have given me all for which I pined—
An aim, a hope, a purpose !—And the blood
Doth rush in warmer currents through my veins,
As a bright fountain from its icy bonds
By the quick sun-stroke freed.

Pro. Aye, this is well !
Such natures burst men's chains !—Now, follow me. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.—*Apartment in a Palace.*

ERIBERT. CONSTANCE.

Con. Will you not hear me ?—Oh ! that they who need
Hourly forgiveness, they who do but live,

While Mercy's voice, beyond th' eternal stars,
Wins the great Judge to listen, should be thus,
In their vain exercise of pageant power,
Hard and relentless!—Gentle brother, yet,
'Tis in your choice to imitate that Heaven
Whose noblest joy is pardon.

Eri. 'Tis too late.

You have a soft and moving voice, which pleads
With eloquent melody—but they must die.

Con. What, die!—for words?—for breath, which leaves no
trace

To sully the pure air, wherewith it blends,
And is, being utter'd, gone?—Why, 'twere enough
For such a venial fault, to be deprived
One little day of man's free heritage,
Heaven's warm and sunny light!—Oh! if you deem
That evil harbours in their souls, at least
Delay the stroke, till guilt, made manifest,
Shall bid stern Justice wake.

Eri. I am not one

Of those weak spirits, that timorously keep watch
For fair occasions, thence to borrow hues
Of virtue for their deeds. My school hath been
Where power sits crown'd and arm'd.—And, mark me, sister!
To a distrustful nature it might seem
Strange, that your lips thus earnestly should plead
For these Sicilian rebels. O'er *my* being
Suspicion holds no power.—And yet take note.—
I have said, and they must die.

Con. Have you no fear?

Eri. Of what?—that heaven should fall?

Con. No!—but that earth

Should arm in madness.—Brother! I have seen
Dark eyes bent on you, e'en 'midst festal throngs,
With such deep hatred settled in their glance,
My heart hath died within me.

Eri. Am I then

To pause, and doubt, and shrink, because a girl,
A dreaming girl, hath trembled at a look?

Con. Oh! looks are no illusions, when the soul,
Which may not speak in words, can find no way
But theirs to liberty!—Have not these men
Brave sons, or noble brothers?

Eri. Yes! whose name

It rests with me to make a word of fear,
A sound forbidden 'midst the haunts of men.

Con. But not forgotten!—Ah! beware, beware!—

Nay, look not sternly on me.—There is one
 Of that devoted band, who yet will need
 Years to be ripe for death. He is a youth,
 A very boy, on whose unshaded cheek
 The spring-time glow is lingering. 'Twas but now
 His mother left me, with a timid hope
 Just dawning in her breast ;—and I—I dared
 To foster its faint spark.—'Vou smile !—Oh ! then
 He will be saved !

Eri. Nay, I but smiled to think
 What a fond fool is hope !—She may be taught
 To deem that the great sun will change his course
 To work her pleasure ; or the tomb give back
 Its inmates to her arms.—In sooth, 'tis strange !
 Yet, with your pitying heart, you should not thus
 Have mock'd the boy's sad mother—I have said
 You should not thus have *mock'd* her ! Now farewell.

[*Exit* ERIBERT.]

Con. Oh, brother ! hard of heart !—for deeds like these
 There must be fearful chastening, if on high
 Justice doth hold her state.—And I must tell
 Yon desolate mother, that her fair young son
 Is thus to perish !—Haply the dread tale
 May slay *her* too ;—for Heaven is merciful.—
 'Twill be a bitter task !

[*Exit* CONSTANCE.]

SCENE II.—*A ruined Tower, surrounded by Woods.*

PROCIDA. VITTORIA.

Pro. Thy vassals are prepared then ?

Vit. Yes, they wait
 Thy summons to their task.

Pro. Keep the flame bright,
 But hidden, till its hour.—Would'st thou dare, lady,
 To join our councils at the night's mid-watch,
 In the lone cavern by the rock-hewn cross ?

Vit. What should I shrink from ?

Pro. Oh ! the forest paths
 Are dim and wild, e'en when the sunshine streams
 Through their high arches : but when powerful night
 Comes, with her cloudy phantoms, and her pale
 Uncertain moonbeams, and the hollow sounds
 Of her mysterious winds ; their aspect *then*
 Is of another and more fearful world ;

A realm of indistinct and shadowy forms,
Wakening strange thoughts, almost too much for this,
Our frail terrestrial nature.

Vit. Well I know

All this, and more. Such scenes have been th' abodes
Where through the silence of my soul have pass'd
Voices, and visions from the sphere of those
That have to die no more !—Nay, doubt it not !
If such unearthly intercourse hath e'er
Been granted to our nature, 'tis to hearts
Whose love is with the dead. They, they alone,
Unmadden'd could sustain the fearful joy
And glory of its trances !—at the hour
Which makes guilt tremulous, and peoples earth
And air with infinite, viewless multitudes,
I will be with thee, Procida.

Pro. Thy presence

Will kindle nobler thoughts, and, in the souls
Of suffering and indignant men, arouse
That which may strengthen our majestic cause
With yet a deeper power.—Know'st thou the spot ?

Vit. Full well. There is no scene so wild and lone
In these dim woods, but I have visited
Its tangled shades.

Pro. At midnight, then, we meet.

[*Exit PROCIDA.*]

Vit. Why should I fear ?—Thou wilt be with me, thou,
Th' immortal dream and shadow of my soul,
Spirit of him I love ! that meet'st me still
In loneliness and silence ; in the noon
Of the wild night, and in the forest-depths,
Known but to me ; for whom thou giv'st the winds
And sighing leaves a cadence of thy voice,
Till my heart faints with that o'erthrilling joy !—
Thou wilt be with me there, and lend my lips
Words, fiery words, to flush dark cheeks with shame,
That thou art unavenged !

[*Exit VITTORIA.*]

SCENE III.—*A Chapel, with a Monument, on which is laid a
Sword.—Moonlight.*

PROCIDA. RAIMOND. MONTALBA.

Mon. And know you not my story ?

Pro. In the lands

Where I have been a wanderer, your deep wrongs

Were number'd with our country's ; but their tale
Came only in faint echoes to mine ear.
I would fain hear it now.

Mon. Hark ! while you spoke,
There was a voice-like murmur in the breeze,
Which ev'n like death came o'er me :—'twas a night
Like this, of clouds contending with the moon,
A night of sweeping winds, of rustling leaves,
And swift wild shadows floating o'er the earth,
Clothed with a phantom-life ; when, after years
Of battle and captivity, I spurred
My good steed homewards.—Oh ! what lovely dreams
Rose on my spirit !—There were tears and smiles,
But all of joy !—And there were bounding steps,
And clinging arms, whose passionate clasp of love
Doth twine so fondly round the warrior's neck,
When his plum'd helm is doff'd.—Hence, feeble 't' nights !
I am sterner now, yet once such dreams were mine !

Rai. And were they realized ?

Mon. Youth ! Ask me not,
But listen !—I drew near my own fair home ;
There was no light along its walls, no sound
Of bugle pealing from the watch-tower's height
At my approach, although my trampling steed
Made the earth ring ; yet the wide gates were thrown
All open.—Then my heart misgave me first,
And on the threshold of my silent hall
I paused a moment, and the wind swept by
With the same deep and dirge-like tone which pierced
My soul e'en now.—I called—my struggling voice
Gave utterance to my wife's, my children's, names ;
They answer'd not—I roused my failing strength,
And wildly rush'd within—and they were there.

Rai. And was all well ?

Mon. Aye, well !—for death is well,
And they were all at rest !—I see them yet,
Pale in their innocent beauty, which had failed
To stay th' assassin's arm !

Rai. Oh, righteous heaven !
Who had done this ?

Mon. Who ?

Pro. Canst thou question, *who* ?
Whom hath the earth to perpetrate such deeds,
In the cold-blooded revelry of crime,
But those whose yoke is on us ?

Rai. Man of woe !

What words hath pity for despair like thine ?

Mon. Pity !—fond youth !—My soul disdains the grief
Which doth unbosom its deep secrecies,
To ask a vain companionship of tears,
And so to be relieved !

Pro. For woes like these
There is no sympathy but vengeance.

Mon. None !
Therefore I brought you hither, that your hearts
Might catch the spirit of the scene !—Look round !
We are in the awful presence of the dead ;
Within yon tomb *they* sleep, whose gentle blood
Weighs down the murderer's soul.—*They* sleep !—but I
Am wakeful o'er their dust !—I laid my sword,
Without its sheath, on their sepulchral stone,
As on an altar ; and th' eternal stars,
And heaven, and night, bore witness to my vow,
No more to wield it save in one great cause,
The vengeance of the grave !—And now the hour
Of that atonement comes ! [*He takes the sword from the tomb.*]

Rai. My spirit burns !
And my full heart almost to bursting swells.—
Oh ! for the day of battle.

Pro. Raimond ! they
Whose souls are dark with guiltless blood must die ;—
But not in battle.

Rai. How, my father !

Pro. No !
Look on that sepulchre, and it will teach
Another lesson.—But th' appointed hour
Advances.—Thou wilt join our chosen band,
Noble Montalba ?

Mon. Leave me for a time,
That I may calm my soul by intercourse
With the still dead, before I mix with men,
And with their passions. I have nursed for years,
In silence and in solitude, the flame
Which doth consume me ; and it is not used
Thus to be look'd or breathed on.—Procida !
I would be tranquil—or appear so—ere
I join your brave confederates. Through my heart
There struck a pang—but it will soon have pass'd.

Pro. Remember !—in the cavern by the cross.
Now, follow me, my son. [*Exeunt PROCIDA and RAIMOND.*]

Mon. (after a pause, leaning on the tomb). Said he "*my son* ?"—Now, why should this man's life
Go down in hope, thus resting on a son,
And I be desolate ?—How strange a sound

Was that—"my son!"—I had a boy, who might
 Have worn as free a soul upon his brow
 As doth this youth.—Why should the thought of *him*
 Thus haunt me?—when I tread the peopled ways
 Of life again, I shall be pass'd each hour
 By fathers with their children, and I must
 Learn calmly to look on.—Methinks 'twere now
 A gloomy consolation to behold
 All men bereft, as I am!—But away,
 Vain thoughts!—One task is left for blighted hearts,
 And it shall be fulfilled. *Exit MONTALBA.*

SCENE IV.—*Entrance of a Cave, surrounded by Rocks and Forests. A rude Cross seen amongst the Rocks.*

PROCIDA. RAIMNOD.

Pro. And is it thus, beneath the solemn skies
 Of midnight, and in solitary caves,
 Where the wild forest-creatures make their lair,—
 Is't thus the chiefs of Sicily must hold
 The councils of their country!

Rai. Why, such scenes
 In their primeval majesty, beheld
 Thus by faint starlight, and the partial glare
 Of the red-streaming lava, will inspire
 Far deeper thoughts than pillar'd halls, wherein
 Statesmen hold weary vigils.—Are we not
 O'ershadowed by that Etna, which of old,
 With its dread prophecies, hath struck dismay
 Through tyrants' hearts, and bade them seek a home
 In other climes?—Hark! from its depths e'en now
 What hollow moans are sent!

Enter MONTALBA, GUIDO, and other SICILIANS.

Pro. Welcome, my brave associates!—We can share
 The wolf's wild freedom here!—Th' oppressor's haunt
 Is not 'midst rocks and caves. Are we all met?

Sic. All, all!

Pro. The torchlight, sway'd by every gust,
 But dimly shows your features.—Where is he
 Who from his battles had returned to breathe
 Once more, without a corslet, and to meet
 The voices and the footsteps, and the smiles,
 Blent with his dreams of home?—Of that dark tale
 The rest is known to vengeance!—Art thou here,

With thy deep wrongs and resolute despair,
Childless Montalba?

Mon. (advancing). He is at thy side.

Call on that desolate father, in the hour
When his revenge is nigh.

Pro. Thou, too, come forth,
From thine own halls an exile!—Dost thou make
The mountain fastnesses thy dwelling still,
While hostile banners, o'er thy rampart walls,
Wave their proud blazonry?

First Sic. Even so. I stood
Last night before my own ancestral towers
An unknown outcast, while the tempest beat
On my bare head—what reck'd it?—There was joy
Within, and revelry; the festive lamps
Were streaming from each turret, and gay songs,
I th' stranger's tongue, made mirth. They little deem'd
Who heard their melodies!—but there are thoughts
Best nurtured in the wild; there are dread vows
Known to the mountain-echoes.—Precida!
Call on the outcast when revenge is nigh.

Pro. I knew a young Sicilian, one whose heart
Should be all fire. On that most guilty day,
When, with our martyr'd Conradin, the flower
Of the land's knighthood perish'd; he, of whom
I speak, a weeping boy, whose innocent tears
Melted a thousand hearts that dared not aid,
Stood by the scaffold, with extended arms,
Calling upon his father, whose last look
Turn'd full on him its parting agony.
That father's blood gush'd o'er him!—and the boy
Then dried his tears, and, with a kindling eye,
And a proud flush on his young cheek, look'd up
To the bright heaven.—Doth he remember still
That bitter hour?

Second Sic. He bears a sheathless sword!—
Call on the orphan when revenge is nigh.

Pro. Our band shows gallantly—but there are men
Who should be with us now, had they not dared
In some wild moment of festivity
To give their full hearts way, and breathe a wish
For freedom!—and some traitor—it might be
A breeze perchance—bore the forbidden sound
To Eribert :—so they must die—unless
Fate (who at times is wayward) should select
Some other victim first!—But have they not
Brothers or sons amongst us?

Gui. Look on me !

I have a brother, a young high-soul'd boy,
And beautiful as a sculptor's dream, with brow
That wears, amidst its dark rich curls, the stamp
Of inborn nobleness. In truth, he is
A glorious creature !—But his doom is seal'd
With theirs of whom you spoke ; and I have knelt—
Aye, scorn me not ! 'twas for his life—I knelt
E'en at the viceroy's feet, and he put on
That heartless laugh of cold malignity
We know so well, and spurn'd me.—But the stain
Of shame like this, takes blood to wash it off,
And *thus* it shall be cancell'd !—Call on me,
When the stern moment of revenge is nigh.

Pro. I call upon thee *now* ! The land's high soul
Is roused, and moving onward, like a breeze
Or a swift sunbeam, kindling nature's hues
To deeper life before it. In his chains,
The peasant dreams of freedom !—aye, 'tis thus
Oppression fans th' imperishable flame
With most unconscious hands.—No praise be her's
For what she blindly works !—When slavery's cup
O'erflows its bounds, the creeping poison, meant
To dull our senses, through each burning vein
Pours fever, lending a delirious strength
To burst man's fetters—and they *shall* be burst !
I have hoped, when hope seem'd frenzy ; but a power
Abides in human will, when bent with strong
Unswerving energy on one great aim,
To make and rule its fortunes !—I have been
A wanderer in the fulness of my years,
A restless pilgrim of the earth and seas,
Gathering the generous thoughts of other lands,
To aid our holy cause. And aid is near :
But we must give the signal. Now, before
The majesty of yon pure Heaven, whose eye
Is on our hearts, whose righteous arm befriends
The arm that strikes for freedom ; speak ! decree
The fate of our oppressors.

Mon. Let them fall
When dreaming least of peril !—When the heart,
Basking in sunny pleasure, doth forget
That hate may smile, but sleeps not.—Hide the sword
With a thick veil of myrtle, and in halls
Of banqueting, where the full wine-cup shines
Red in the festal torch-light ; meet we there,
And bid them welcome to the feast of death.

Pro. Thy voice is low and broken, and thy words
Scarce meet our ears.

Mon. Why, then, I thus repeat
Their import. Let th' avenging sword burst forth
In some free festal hour, and woe to him
Who first shall spare!

Rai. Must innocence and guilt
Perish alike?

Mon. Who talks of innocence?
When hath *their* hand been stay'd for innocence?
Let them all perish!—Heaven will choose its own.
Why should *their* children live?—The earthquake whelms
Its undistinguish'd thousands, making graves
Of peopled cities in its path—and this
Is Heaven's dread justice—aye, and it is well!
Why then should *we* be tender, when the skies
Deal thus with man?—What, if the infant bleed?
Is there not power to hush the mother's pangs?
What, if the youthful bride perchance should fall
In her triumphant beauty?—Should we pause?
As if death were not mercy to the pangs
Which make our lives the records of our foes?
Let them all perish!—And if one be found
Amidst our band, to stay th' avenging steel
For pity, or remorse, or boyish love,
Then be his doom as theirs!

[*A pause.*

Why gaze ye thus?
Brethren, what means your silence?

Sic. Be it so!
If one amongst us stay th' avenging steel
For love or pity, be his doom as theirs!
Pledge we our faith to this!

RAIMOND (*rushing forward indignantly*). Our faith to *this*!
No! I but *dreamt* I heard it!—Can it be?
My countrymen, my father!—Is it thus
That freedom should be won?—Awake! Awake
To loftier thoughts!—Lift up, exultingly,
On the crown'd heights, and to the sweeping winds,
Your glorious banner!—Let your trumpet's blast
Make the tombs thrill with echoes! Call aloud,
Proclaim from all your hills, the land shall bear
The stranger's yoke no longer!—What is he
Who carries on his practised lip a smile,
Beneath his vest a dagger, which but waits
Till the heart bounds with joy, to still its beatings?
That which our nature's instinct doth recoil from,
And our blood curdle at—aye, yours and mine—

A murderer!—Heard ye?—Shall that name with ours
Go down to after days?—Oh, friends! a cause
Like that for which we rise, hath made bright names
Of the elder time as rallying-words to men,
Sounds full of might and immortality!
And shall not ours be such?

Mon. Fond dreamer, peace!
Fame! What is fame?—Will our unconscious dust
Start into thrilling rapture from the grave
At the vain breath of praise?—I tell thee, youth,
Our souls are parch'd with agonizing thirst,
Which must be quench'd though death were in the draught.
We must have vengeance, for our foes have left
No other joy unblighted.

Pro. Oh! my son,
The time is past for such high dreams as thine.
Thou know'st not whom we deal with. Knightly faith
And chivalrous honour, are but things whereon
They cast disdainful pity. We must meet
Falsehood with wiles, and insult with revenge.
And, for our names—whate'er the deeds, by which
We burst our bondage—is it not enough
That in the chronicle of days to come,
We, through a bright "For ever," shall be called
The men who saved their country?

Rai. Many a land
Hath bow'd beneath the yoke, and then arisen,
As a strong lion rending silken bonds,
And on the open field, before high Heaven,
Won such majestic vengeance, as hath made
Its name a power on earth.—Aye, nations own
It is enough of glory to be call'd
The children of the mighty, who redeem'd
Their native soil—but not by means like these.

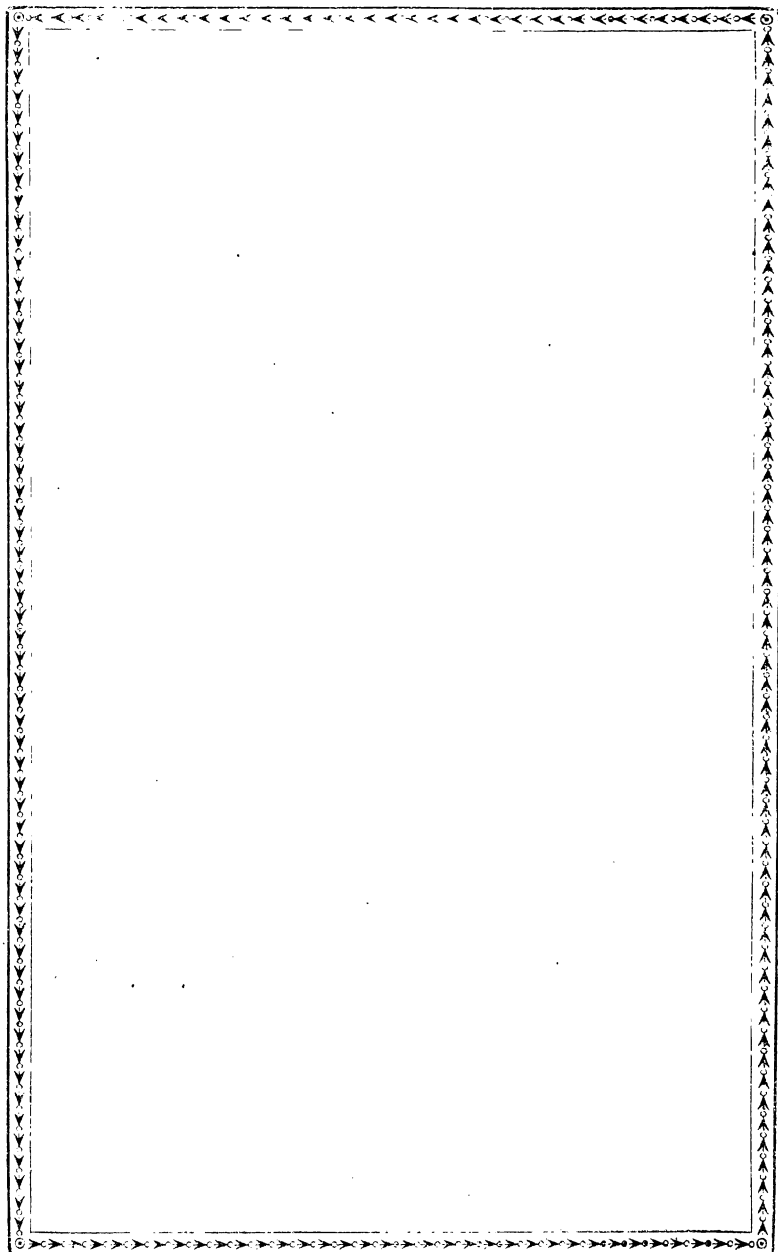
Mon. I have no children.—Of Montalba's blood
Not one red drop doth circle through the veins
Of aught that breathes!—Why, what have I to do
With far futurity?—My spirit lives
But in the past.—Away! when thou dost stand
On this fair earth, as doth a blasted tree
Which the warm sun revives not, *then* return,
Strong in thy desolation: but, till then,
Thou art not for our purpose; we have need
Of more unshinking hearts.

Rai. Montalba, know,
I shrink from crime alone. Oh! if my voice
Might yet have power amongst you, I would say,



Procla.—"See thou waver not—take heed!"

[A. 282.]



Associates, leaders, *be* avenged ! but yet
As knights, as warriors !

Mon. Peace ! have we not borne
Th' indelible taint of contumely and chains ?
We *are not* knights and warriors.—Our bright crests
Have been defiled and trampled to the earth.
Boy ! we are slaves—and our revenge shall be
Deep as a slave's disgrace.

Rai. Why, then, farewell :
I leave you to your counsels. He that still
Would hold his lofty nature undebased,
And his name pure, were but a loiterer here.

Pro. And is it thus indeed ?—dost *thou* forsake
Our cause, my son ?

Rai. Oh, father ! what proud hopes
This hour hath blighted !—yet, whate'er betide,
It is a noble privilege to look up
Fearless in heaven's bright face—and this is mine,
And shall be still.— [Exit RAIMOND.

Pro. He's gone !—Why, let it be !
I trust our Sicily hath many a son
Valiant as mine.—Associates ! 'tis decreed
Our foes shall perish. We have but to name
The hour, the scene, the signal.

Mon. It should be
In the full city, when some festival
Hath gathered throngs, and lull'd infatuate hearts
To brief security. Hark ! is there not
A sound of hurrying footsteps on the breeze ?
We are betray'd.—Who art thou ?

VITTORIA enters.

Pro. One alone
Should be thus daring. Lady, lift the veil
That shades thy noble brow.

[*She raises her veil, the Sicilians draw back with respect.*

Sic. Th' affianced bride
Of our lost King !

Pro. And more, Montalba ; know
Within this form there dwells a soul as high,
As warriors in their battles e'er have proved,
Or patriots on the scaffold.

Vit. Valiant men !
I come to ask your aid. Ye see me, one
Whose widow'd youth hath all been consecrate
To a proud sorrow, and whose life is held
In token and memorial of the dead.

Say, is it meet that, lingering thus on earth,
But to behold one great atonement made,
And keep one name from fading in men's hearts,
A tyrant's will should force me to profane
Heaven's altar with unhallow'd vows—and live
Stung by the keen, unutterable scorn
Of my own bosom, live—another's bride?

Sic. Never, oh never!—fear not, noble lady!
Worthy of Conradin!

Vit. Yet hear me still.
His bride, that Eribert's, who notes our tears
With his insulting eye of cold derision,
And, could he pierce the depths where feeling works,
Would number e'en our agonies as crimes.—
Say, is this meet?

Gui. We deem'd these nuptials, lady,
Thy willing choice; but 'tis a joy to find
Thou art noble still. Fear not; by all our wrongs
This shall not be.

Pro. Vittoria, thou art come
To ask our aid, but we have need of thine.
Know, the completion of our high designs
Requires—a festival; and it must be
Thy bridal!

Vit. Procida!

Pro. Nay, start not thus.
'Tis no hard task to bind your raven hair
With festal garlands, and to bid the song
Rise, and the wine-cup mantle. No—nor yet
To meet your suitor at the glittering shrine,
Where death, not love, awaits him!

Vit. Can my scul
Dissemble thus?

Pro. We have no other means
Of winning our great birthright back from those
Who have usurp'd it, than so lulling them
Into vain confidence, that they may deem
All wrongs forgot; and this may best be done
By what I ask of thee.

Mon. Then will we mix
With the flush'd revellers, making their gay feast
The harvest of the grave.

Vit. A bridal day!—
Must it be so?—Then, chiefs of Sicily,
I bid you to my nuptials! but be there
With your bright swords unsheath'd, for thus alone
My guests should be adorn'd.

Pro. And let thy banquet
Be soon announced, for there are noble men
Sentenced to die, for whom we fain would purchase
Reprieve with other blood.

Vit. Be it then the day
Preceding that appointed for their doom.

Gui. My brother, thou shalt live !—Oppression boasts
No gift of prophecy !—It but remains
To name our signal, chiefs !

Mon. The Vesper-bell.

Pro. Even so, the Vesper-bell, whose deep-toned peal
Is heard o'er land and wave. Part of our band,
Wearing the guise of antic revelry,
Shall enter, as in some fantastic pageant,
The halls of Eribert ; and at the hour
Devoted to the sword's tremendous task,
I follow with the rest.—The Vesper-bell !
That sound shall wake th' avenger ; for 'tis come,
The time when power is in a voice, a breath,
To burst the spell which bound us.—But the night
Is waning, with her stars, which, one by one,
Warn us to part. Friends, to your homes !—your homes !
That name is yet to win.—Away, prepare
For our next meeting in Palermo's walls.
The Vesper-bell ! Remember !

Sic. Fear us not.

The Vesper-bell !

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.—*Apartment in a Palace.*

ERIBERT. VITTORIA.

Vit. Speak not of love—it is a word with deep,
Strange magic in its melancholy sound,
To summon up the dead ; and they should rest,
At such an hour, forgotten. There are things
We must throw from us, when the heart would gather
Strength to fulfil its settled purposes :
Therefore, no more of love !—But, if to robe
This form in bridal ornaments, to smile
(*I can smile yet*) at thy gay feast, and stand
At th' altar by thy side ; if this be deem'd
Enough, it shall be done.

Eri. My fortune's star
Doth rule th' ascendant still! (*apart.*)—If not of love,
Then pardon, lady, that I speak of joy,
And with exulting heart—

Vit. There is no joy!—
Who shall look through the far futurity,
And, as the shadowy visions of events
Develope on his gaze, 'midst their dim throng,
Dare, with oracular mien, to point, and say,
"This will bring happiness?"—Who shall do this?—
Why, thou, and I, and all!—There's One, who sits
In his own bright tranquillity enthroned,
High o'er all storms, and looking far beyond
Their thickest clouds; but we, from whose dull eyes
A grain of dust hides the great sun, e'en *we*
Usurp his attributes, and talk, as seers,
Of future joy and grief!

Eri. Thy words are strange.
Yet will I hope that peace at length shall settle
Upon thy troubled heart, and add soft grace
To thy majestic beauty.—Fair Vittoria!
Oh! if my cares—

Vit. I know a day shall come
Of peace to all. Ev'n from my darken'd spirit
Soon shall each restless wish be exorcised,
Which haunts it now, and I shall then lie down
Serenely to repose. Of this no more—
I have a boon to ask.

Eri. Command my power,
And deem it thus most honour'd.

Vit. Have I then
Soar'd such an eagle-pitch, as to command
The mighty Eriber?—And yet 'tis meet;
For I bethink me now, I should have worn
A crown upon this forehead.—Generous lord!
Since thus you give me freedom, know, there is
An hour I have loved from childhood, and a sound,
Whose tones, o'er earth and ocean sweetly bearing
A sense of deep repose, have lull'd me oft
To peace—which is forgetfulness: I mean
The Vesper-bell. I pray you, let it be
The summons to our bridal—Hear you not?
To our fair bridal?

Eri. Lady, let your will
Appoint each circumstance. I am but too bless'd
Proving my homage thus.

Vit. Why, then, 'tis mine

To rule the glorious fortunes of the day,
And I may be content. Yet much remains
For thought to brood on, and I would be left
Alone with my resolves. Kind Eribert !
(Whom I command so absolutely), now
Part we a few brief hours ; and doubt not, when
I am at thy side once more, but I shall stand
There—to the last.

Eri. Your smiles are troubled, lady ;
May they ere long be brighter !—Time will seem
Slow till the Vesper-bell.

Vit. 'Tis lovers' phrase
To say—time lags ; and therefore meet for you :
But with an equal pace the hours move on,
Whether they bear, on their swift silent wing,
Pleasure or—fate.

Eri. Be not so full of thought
On such a day.—Behold, the skies themselves
Look on my joy with a triumphant smile,
Unshadow'd by a cloud.

Vit. 'Tis very meet
That Heaven (which loves the just) should wear a smile
In honour of his fortunes.—Now, my lord,
Forgive me if I say, farewell, until
Th' appointed hour.

Eri. Lady, a brief farewell.

[*Exeunt separately.*]

SCENE II.—*The Sea-shore.*

PROCIDA. RAIMOND.

Pro. And dost thou still refuse to share the glory
Of this our daring enterprise ?

Rai. Oh, father !
I too have dreamt of glory, and the word
Hath to my soul been as a trumpet's voice,
Making my nature sleepless.—But the deeds
Whereby 'twas won, the high exploits, whose tale
Bids the heart burn, were of another cast
'Than such as thou requirest.

Pro. Every deed
Hath sanctity, if bearing for its aim
The freedom of our country ; and the sword
Alike is honour'd in the patriot's hand,

Searching, 'midst warrior-hosts, the heart which gave
Oppression birth ; or flashing through the gloom
Of the still chamber, o'er its troubled couch,
At dead of night.

Rai. (turning away). There is no path but one
For noble natures.

Pro. Wouldst thou ask the man
Who to the earth hath dash'd a nation's chains,
Rent as with heaven's own lightning, by what *means*
The glorious end was won ?—Go, swell th' acclaim !
Bid the deliverer, hail ! and if his path
To that most bright and sovereign destiny
Hath led o'er trampled thousands, be it call'd
A stern necessity, and not a crime !

Rai. Father ! my soul yet kindles at the thought
Of nobler lessons, in my boyhood learn'd
Ev'n from thy voice.—The high remembrances
Of other days are stirring in the heart
Where *thou* didst plant them ; and they speak of men
Who needed no vain sophistry to gild
Acts, that would bear heaven's light.—And such be mine !
Oh, father ! is it yet too late to draw
The praise and blessing of all valiant hearts
On our most righteous cause ?

Pro. What wouldst thou do ?

Rai. I would go forth, and rouse th' indignant land
To generous combat. Why should freedom strike
Mantled with darkness ?—Is there not more strength
E'en in the waving of her single arm
Than hosts can wield against her ?—I would rouse
That spirit, whose fire doth press resistless on
To its proud sphere, the stormy field of fight !

Pro. Aye ! and give time and warning to the foe
To gather all his might !—It is too late.
There is a work to be this eve begun,
When rings the Vesper-bell ! and, long before
To-morrow's sun hath reach'd i' th' noonday heaven
His throne of burning glory, every sound
Of the Provençal tongue within our walls,
As by one thunderstroke—(you are pale, my son)—
Shall be for ever silenced.

Rai. What ! such sounds
As falter on the lip of infancy
In its imperfect utterance ? or are breathed
By the fond mother, as she lulls her babe ?
Or in sweet hymns, upon the twilight air
Pour'd by the timid maid ?—Must all alike

Be still'd in death ; and wouldst thou tell my heart
There is no crime in *this* !

Pro. Since thou dost feel
Such horror of our purpose, in thy power
Are means that might avert it.

Rai. Speak ! Oh, speak !

Pro. How would those rescued thousands bless thy name
Shouldst thou betray us !

Rai. Father ! I can bear—
Aye, proudly woo—the keenest questioning
Of thy soul-gifted eye ; which almost seems
To claim a part of Heaven's dread royalty,—
The power that searches thought !

Pro. (after a pause). Thou hast a brow
Clear as the day—and yet I doubt thee, Raimond !
Whether it be that I have learn'd distrust
From a long look through man's deep-folded heart ;
Whether my paths have been so seldom cross'd
By honour and fair mercy, that they seem
But beautiful deceptions, meeting thus
My unaccustom'd gaze ;—howe'er it be—
I doubt thee !—See thou waver not—take heed !
Time lifts the veil from all things ! [Exit PROCIDA.]

Rai. And 'tis thus
Youth fades from off our spirit ; and the robes
Of beauty and of majesty, wherewith
We clothed our idols, drop ! Oh ! bitter day,
When, at the crushing of our glorious world,
We start, and find men thus !—Yet be it so !
Is not my soul still powerful, in *itself*
To realize its dreams ?—Aye, shrinking not
From the pure eye of heaven, my brow may well
Undaunted meet my father's.—But, away !
Thou shalt be saved, sweet Constance !—Love is yet
Mightier than vengeance. [Exit RAIMOND.]

SCENE III.—*Gardens of a Palace.*

CONSTANCE *alone.*

Con. There was a time when my thoughts wander'd not
Beyond these fairy scenes ; when, but to catch
The languid fragrance of the southern breeze
From the rich-flowering citrons, or to rest,
Dreaming of some wild legend, in the shade

Of the dark laurel-foliage, was enough
Of happiness.—How have these calm delights
Fled from before one passion, as the dews,
The delicate gems of morning, are exhaled
By the great sun !

(*RAIMOND enters.*)

Raimond ! oh ! now thou 'rt come

I read it in thy look, to say farewell
For the last time—the last !

Rai. No, best beloved !

I come to tell thee there is now no power
To part us—but in death.

Con. I have dreamt of joy,
But never aught like this.—Speak yet again !
Say, we shall part no more !

Rai. No more, if love
Can strive with darker spirits, and he is strong
In his immortal nature ! all is changed
Since last we met. My father—keep the tale
Secret from all, and most of all, my Constance,
From Eribert—my father is return'd :
I leave thee not.

Con. Thy father ! blessed sound !
Good angels be his guard !—Oh ! if he knew
How my soul clings to thine, he could not hate
Even a Provençal maid !—Thy father !—now
Thy soul will be at peace, and I shall see
The sunny happiness of earlier days
Look from thy brow once more !—But how is this ?
Thine eye reflects not the glad soul of mine ;
And in thy look is that which ill befits
A tale of joy.

Rai. A dream is on my soul.
I see a slumberer, crown'd with flowers, and smiling
As in delighted visions, on the brink
Of a dread chasm ; and this strange phantasy
Hath cast so deep a shadow o'er my thoughts,
I cannot but be sad.

Con. Why, let me sing
One of the sweet wild strains you love so well,
And this will banish it.

Rai. It may not be.
Oh ! gentle Constance, go not forth to-day :
Such dreams are ominous.

Con. Have you then forgot
My brother's nuptial feast ?—I must be one

Of the gay train attending to the shrine
His stately bride. In sooth, my step of joy
Will print earth lightly now.—What fear'st thou, love ?
Look all around ! these blue transparent skies,
And sunbeams pouring a more buoyant life
Through each glad thrilling vein, will brightly chase
All thought of evil.—Why, the very air
Breathes of delight !—Through all its glowing realms
Doth music blend with fragrance, and e'en here
The city's voice of jubilee is heard
Till each light leaf seems trembling unto sounds
Of human joy !

Rai. There lie far deeper things,—
Things, that may darken thought for life, beneath
That city's festive semblance.—I have pass'd
Through the glad multitudes, and I have mark'd
A stern intelligence in meeting eyes,
Which deem'd their flash unnoticed, and a quick,
Suspicious vigilance, too intent to clothe
Its mien with carelessness ; and, now and then,
A hurrying start, a whisper, or a hand
Pointing by stealth to some one, singled out
Amidst the reckless throng. O'er all is spread
A mantling flush of revelry, which may hide
Much from unpractised eyes ; but lighter signs
Have been prophetic oft.

Con. I tremble !—Raimond !
What may these things portend ?

Rai. It was a day
Of festival, like this ; the city sent
Up through her sunny firmament a voice
Joyous as now ; when, scarcely heralded
By one deep moan, forth from his cavernous depths
The earthquake burst ; and the wide splendid scene
Became one chaos of all fearful things,
Till the brain whirl'd, partaking the sick motion
Of rocking palaces.

Con. And then didst thou,
My noble Raimond ! through the dreadful paths
Laid open by destruction, past the chasms,
Whose fathomless clefts, a moment's work, had given
One burial unto thousands, rush to save
Thy trembling Constance ! she who lives to bless
Thy generous love, that still the breath of heaven
Wafts gladness to her soul !

Rai. Heaven !—Heaven is just !
And being so, must guard thee, sweet one, still.

Trust none beside.—Oh ! the omnipotent skies
 Make their wrath manifest, but insidious *man*
 Doth compass those he hates with *secret* snares,
 Wherein lies fate, Know, danger walks abroad,
 Mask'd as a reveller. Constance ! oh ! by all
 Our tried affection, all the vows which bind
 Our hearts together, meet me in these bowers ;
 Here, I adjure thee, meet me, when the bell
 Doth sound for vesper-prayer !

Con. And know'st thou not
 'Twill be the bridal hour ?

Rai. It will not, love !
 That hour will bring no bridal !—Nought of this
 To human ear ; but speed thou hither, fly,
 When evening brings that signal.—Dost thou heed ?
 This is no meeting by a lover sought
 To breathe fond tales, and make the twilight groves
 And stars attest his vows ; deem thou not so,
 Therefore denying it !—I tell thee, Constance !
 If thou wouldst save me from such fierce despair
 As falls on man, beholding all he loves
 Perish before him, while his strength can but
 Strive with his agony—thou 'lt meet me then ?
 Look on me, love !—I am not oft so moved—
 Thou 'lt meet me ?

Con. Oh ! what mean thy words ?—If then
 My steps are free,—I will. Be thou but calm.

Rai. Be calm !—there is a cold and sullen calm,
 And, were my wild fears made realities,
 It might be mine ; but, in this dread suspense,
 This conflict of all terrible phantasies,
 There is no calm.—Yet fear thou not, dear love !
 I will watch o'er thee still. And now, farewell
 Until that hour !

Con. My Raimond, fare thee well.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—*Room in the Citadel of Palermo,*

ALBERTI. DE COUCL.

De Cou. Said'st thou this night ?

Alb. This very night—and lo !
 E'en now the sun declines.

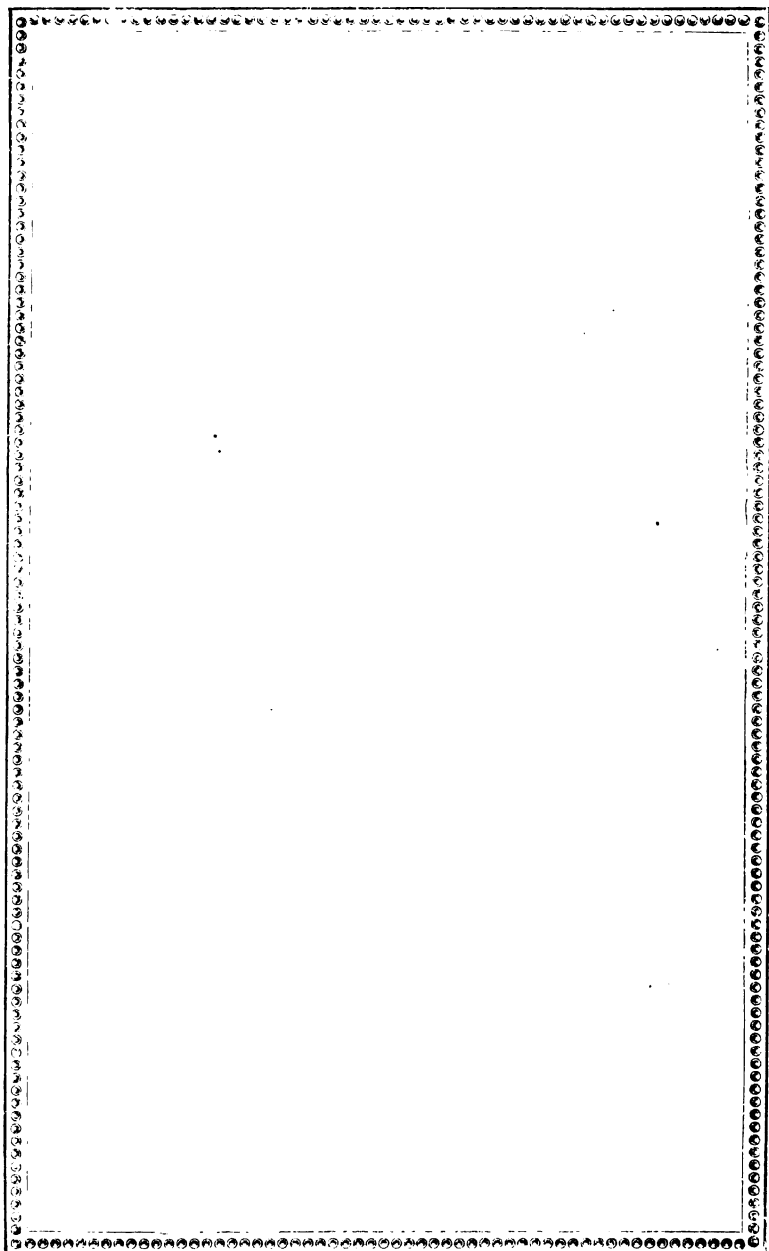
De Cou. What ! are they arm'd ?

Alb. All arm'd, and strong in vengeance and despair.



Constance.—"There was a time when my thoughts wander'd not
Beyond these fairy scenes."

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De Cou. Doubtful and strange the tale ! Why was not this
Reveal'd before ?

Alb. Mistrust me not, my lord !
That stern and jealous Procida hath kept
O'er all my steps (as though he did suspect
The purposes, which oft his eye hath sought
To read in mine) a watch so vigilant,
I knew not how to warn thee, though for this
Alone I mingled with his bands, to learn
Their projects and their strength. Thou know'st my faith
To Anjou's house full well.

De Cou. How may we now
Avert the gathering storm ?—The viceroy holds
His bridal feast, and all is revelry.—
'Twas a true-boding heaviness of heart,
Which kept me from these nuptials.

Alb. Thou thyself
Mayst yet escape, and, haply of thy bands
Rescue a part, ere long to wreak full vengeance
Upon these rebels. 'Tis too late to dream
Of saving Eribert. E'en shouldst thou rush
Before him with the tidings, in his pride
And confidence of soul, he would but laugh
Thy tale to scorn.

De Cou. He must not die unwarn'd,
Though it be all in vain. But thou, Alberti,
Rejoin thy comrades, lest thine absence wake
Suspicion in their hearts. Thou hast done well,
And shalt not pass unguerdon'd, should I live
Through the deep horrors of th' approaching night.

Alb. Noble De Couci, trust me still. Anjou
Commands no heart more faithful than Alberti's.

[*Exit ALBERTI*]

De Cou. The grovelling slave !—And yet he spoke too true !
For Eribert, in blind elated joy,
Will scorn the warning voice.—The day wanes fast,
And through the city, recklessly dispersed,
Unarm'd and unprepared, my soldiers revel,
E'en on the brink of fate.—I must away. [*Exit DE COUCI.*]

SCENE V.—*A Banqueting Hall.*

PROVENÇAL NOBLES assembled.

First Noble. Joy be to this fair meeting!—Who hath seen
The viceroy's bride?

Second Noble. I saw her, as she pass'd
The gazing throngs assembled in the city.
'Tis said she hath not left for years, till now,
Her castle's wood-girt solitude. 'Twill gall
These proud Sicilians, that her wide domains
Should be the conqueror's guerdon.

Third Noble. 'Twas their boast
With what fond faith she worshipp'd still the name
Of the boy, Conradin. How will the slaves
Brook this new triumph of their lords?

Second Noble. In sooth
It stings them to the quick. In the full streets
They mix with our Provençals, and assume
A guise of mirth, but it sits hardly on them.
'Twere worth a thousand festivals, to see
With what a bitter and unnatural effort
They strive to smile!

First Noble. Is this Vittoria fair?

Second Noble. Of a most noble mien; but yet her beauty
Is wild and awful, and her large dark eye,
In its unsettled glances, hath strange power,
From which thou'lt shrink, as I did.

First Noble. Hush! they come.

Enter ERIBERT, VITTORIA, CONSTANCE, and others.

Eri. Welcome, my noble friends!—there must not lower
One clouded brow to-day in Sicily!
Behold my bride!

Nobles. Receive our homage, lady!

Vit. I bid all welcome. May the feast we offer
Prove worthy of such guests!

Eri. Look on her, friends!
And say if that majestic brow is not
Meet for a diadem?

Vit. 'Tis well, my lord!
When memory's pictures fade, 'tis kindly done
To brighten their dimm'd hues!

First Noble (apart). Mark'd you her glance?

Second Noble (apart). What eloquent scorn was there! yet
he, th' elate

Of heart, perceives it not.

Eri. Now to the feast!

Constance, you look not joyous. I have said
That all should smile to-day.

Con. Forgive me, brother!

The heart is wayward, and its garb of pomp
At times oppresses it.

Eri. Why how is this?

Con. Voices of woe, and prayers of agony
Unto my soul have risen, and left sad sounds
There echoing still. Yet would I fain be gay,
Since 'tis your wish.—In truth, I should have been
A village-maid!

Eri. But, being as you are,
Not thus ignobly free, command your looks
(They may be taught obedience) to reflect
The aspect of the time.

Vit. And know, fair maid!

That if in this unskill'd, you stand alone
Amidst our court of pleasure.

Eri. To the feast!

Now let the red wine foam!—There should be mirth
When conquerors revel!—Lords of this fair isle!
Your good swords' heritage, crown each bowl, and pledge
The present and the future! for they both
Look brightly on us. Dost thou smile, my bride?

Vit. Yes, Eriber!—thy prophecies of joy
Have taught e'en me to smile.

Eri. 'Tis well. To-day

I have won a fair and almost *royal* bride;
To-morrow—let the bright sun speed his course,
To waft me happiness!—my proudest foes
Must die—and then my slumber shall be laid
On rose-leaves, with no envious fold, to mar
The luxury of its visions!—Fair Vittoria,
Your looks are troubled!

Vit. It is strange, but oft,

'Midst festal songs and garlands, o'er my soul
Death comes, with some dull image! as you spoke
Of those whose blood is claim'd, I thought for them
Who, in a darkness thicker than the night
E'er wove with all her clouds, have pined so long:
How blessed were the stroke which makes them things
Of that invisible world, wherein, we trust,

There is, at least, no bondage!—But should *we*
 From such a scene as this, where all earth's joys
 Contend for mastery, and the very sense
 Of life is rapture; should *we* pass, I say,
 At once from such excitements to the void
 And silent gloom of that which doth await us—
 Were it not dreadful?

Eri. Banish such dark thoughts!
 They ill beseem the hour.

Vit. There is no hour
 Of this mysterious world, in joy or woe,
 But they beseem it well!—Why, what a slight,
 Impalpable bound is that, th' unseen, which severs
 Being from death!—And who can tell how near
 Its misty brink he stands?

First Noble (aside). What mean her words?

Second Noble. There's some dark mystery here.

Eri. No more of this!
 Pour the bright juice which Etna's glowing vines
 Yield to the conquerors! And let music's voice
 Dispel these ominous dreams!—Wake, harp, and song!
 Swell out your triumph!

(A MESSENGER enters, bearing a letter.)

Mes. Pardon, my good Lord!
 But this demands—

Eri. What means thy breathless haste?
 And that ill-boding mien?—Away! such looks
 Befit not hours like these.

Mes. The Lord De Couci
 Bade me bear this, and say, 'tis fraught with tidings
 Of life and death.

Vit. (hurriedly). Is this a time for aught
 But revelry?—My lord, these dull intrusions
 Mar the bright spirit of the festal scene!

Eri. (to the Mes.) Hence! tell the Lord De Couci we will
 talk

Of life and death to-morrow. [Exit MESSENGER.

Let there be
 Around me none but joyous looks to-day,
 And strains whose very echoes wake to mirth!

[A band of the Conspiritors enter, to the sound of music,
 disguised as shepherds, bacchanals, &c.]

Eri. What forms are these?—what means this antic triumph?

Vit. 'Tis but a rustic pageant, by my vassals
Prepared to grace our bridal. Will you not
Hear their wild music? Our Sicilian vales
Have many a sweet and mirthful melody,
To which the glad heart bounds.—Breathe ye some strain
Meet for the time, ye sons of Sicily!

(One of the Masquers sings.)

The festal eve, o'er earth and sky,
In her sunset robe, looks bright;
And the purple hills of Sicily,
With their vineyards, laugh in light;
From the marble cities of her plains
Glad voices mingling swell;—
But with yet more loud and lofty strains,
They shall hail the Vesper-bell!

Oh! sweet its tones, when the summer breeze
Their cadence wafts afar,
To float o'er the blue Sicilian seas,
As they gleam to the first pale star!
The shepherd greets them on his height,
The hermit in his cell;—
But a deeper power shall breathe, to-night,
In the sound of the Vesper-bell!

[The Bell rings.]

Eri.—It is the hour!—Hark, hark!—my bride, our
summons!
The altar is prepared and crown'd with flowers
That wait—

Vit. The victim!

[A tumult heard without.]

PROCIDA and MONTALBA enter, with others, armed.

Pro. Strike! the hour is come!

Vit. Welcome, avengers, welcome! Now, be strong!

*[The Conspirators throw off their disguise, and rush with
their swords drawn, upon the Provençals. ERIBERT
is wounded, and falls.]*

Pro. Now hath fate reach'd thee in thy mid career,
Thou reveller in a nation's agonies!

[The Provençals are driven off, and pursued by the Sicilians.]

Con. (*supporting ERIBERT*). My brother ! oh ! my brother !

Eri. Have I stood

A leader in the battle-fields of kings,
To perish thus at last ?—Aye, by these pangs,
And this strange chill, that heavily doth creep,
Like a slow poison, through my curdling veins,
This should be—death !—In sooth a dull exchange
For the gay bridal feast !

Voices (without). Remember Conradin !—spare none, spare none !

Vit. (*throwing off her bridal wreath and ornaments*).

This is proud freedom ! Now my soul may cast,
In generous scorn, her mantle of dissembling
To earth for ever !—And it is such joy,
As if a captive, from his dull, cold cell,
Might soar at once on charter'd wing to range
The realms of starr'd infinity !—Away !
Vain mockery of a bridal wreath ! The hour
For which stern patience ne'er kept watch in vain
Is come ; and I may give my bursting heart
Full and indignant scope.—Now, Eribert !
Believe in retribution ! What, proud man !
Prince, ruler, conqueror ! didst thou deem Heaven slept ?
“Or that the unseen, immortal ministers,
Ranging the world, to note e'en purposed crime
In burning characters, had laid aside
Their everlasting attributes for *thee* !”—
Oh ! blind security !—He, in whose dread hand
The lightnings vibrate, holds them back, until
The trampler of this goodly earth hath reach'd
His pyramid-height of power ; that so his fall
May, with more fearful oracles, make pale
Man's crown'd oppressors !

Con. Oh ! reproach him not !

His soul is trembling on the dizzy brink
Of that dim world where passion may not enter.
Leave him in peace !

Voices (without). Anjou, Anjou !—De Couci to the rescue !

Eri. (*half-raising himself*). My brave Provençals ! do ye
combat still ?

And I, your chief, am here !—Now, now I feel
That death indeed is bitter !

Vit. Fare thee well !

Thine eyes so oft, with their insulting smile,
Have looked on man's last pangs, thou shouldst, by this,
Be perfect how to die !

[*Exit VITTORIA.*]

RAIMOND enters.

Rai. Away, my Constance !
Now is the time for flight. Our slaughtering bands
Are scatter'd far and wide. A little while
And thou shalt be in safety. Know'st thou not
That low sweet vale, where dwells the holy man,
Anselmo ? He whose hermitage is rear'd
'Mid some old temple's ruin ?—Round the spot
His name hath spread so pure and deep a charm,
'Tis hallow'd as a sanctuary, wherein
Thou shalt securely bide, till this wild storm
Hath spent its fury. Haste !

Con. I will not fly !
While in his heart there is one throb of life,
One spark in his dim eyes, I will not leave
The brother of my youth to perish thus,
Without one kindly bosom to sustain
His dying head.

Eri. The clouds are darkening round.
There are strange voices ringing in my ear
That summon me—to what ?—But I have been
Used to command !—Away ! I will not die
But on the field—

[*He dies.*]

Con. (*kneeling by him*). Oh Heaven ! be merciful,
As thou art just !—for he is now where nought
But mercy can avail him !—It is past !

GUIDO enters, with his sword drawn.

Gui. (*to RAIMOND*). I've sought thee long—Why art thou
lingering here ?
Haste, follow me !—Suspicion with thy name
Joins that word—*Traitor !*

Rai. Traitor !—Guido ?

Gui. Yes !
Hast thou not heard that, with his men-at-arms,
After vain conflict with a people's wrath,
De Couci hath escaped ?—And there are those
Who murmur that from *thee* the warning came
Which saved him from our vengeance. But e'en yet
In the red current of Provençal blood
That doubt may be effaced. Draw thy good sword,
And follow me !

Rai. And *thou* couldst doubt me, Guido !
'Tis come to this !—Away ! mistrust me still.

I will not stain my sword with deeds like thine.
Thou know'st me not !

Gui. Raimond di Procida !
If thou art he whom once I deem'd so noble—
Call me thy friend no more !

[*Exit* GUIDO.]

Rai. (*after a pause*). Rise, dearest, rise !
Thy duty's task hath nobly been fulfill'd,
E'en in the face of death ; but all is o'er,
And this is now no place where nature's tears
In quiet sanctity may freely flow.—
Hark ! the wild sounds that wait on fearful deeds
Are swelling on the winds, as the deep roar
Of fast-advancing billows ; and for *thee*
I shame not thus to tremble.—Speed, oh, speed !

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I.—*A Street in Palermo.*

PROCIDA enters.

Pro. How strange and deep a stillness loads the air,
As with the power of midnight !—Aye, where death
Hath pass'd, there should be silence.—But this hush
Of nature's heart, this breathlessness of all things,
Doth press on thought too heavily, and the sky,
With its dark robe of purple thunder-clouds
Brooding in sullen masses, o'er my spirit,
Weighs like an omen !—Wherefore should this be ?
Is not our task achieved, the mighty work
Of our deliverance ?—Yes ; I should be joyous :
But this our feeble nature, with its quick
Instinctive superstitions, will drag down
Th' ascending soul.—And I have fearful bodings
That treachery lurks amongst us.—Raimond ! Raimond !
Oh ! Guilt ne'er made a mien like his its garb !
It cannot be !

MONTALBA, GUIDO, and other Sicilians enter.

Pro. Welcome ! we meet in joy !
Now may we bear ourselves erect, resuming
The kingly port of freemen ! Who shall dare,
After this proof of slavery's dread recoil,
To weave us chains again ?—Ye have done well.

Mon. We *have* done well. There need no choral song,
No shouting multitudes to blazon forth
Our stern exploits.—The *silence* of our foes
Doth vouch enough, and they are laid to rest
Deep as the sword could make it. Yet our task
Is still but half achieved, since, with his bands,
De Couci hath escaped, and, doubtless, leads
Their footsteps to Messina, where our foes
Will gather all their strength. Determined hearts,
And deeds to startle earth, are yet required
To make the mighty sacrifice complete.—
Where is thy son?

Pro. I know not. Once last night
He cross'd my path, and with one stroke beat down
A sword just raised to smite me, and restored
My own, which in that deadly strife had been
Wrench'd from my grasp : but when I would have press'd him
To my exulting bosom, he drew back,
And with a sad, and yet a scornful, smile,
Full of strange meaning, left me. Since that hour
I have not seen him. Wherefore didst thou ask?

Mon. It matters not. We have deeper things to speak of.—
Know'st thou that we have traitors in our councils?

Pro. I know some voice in secret must have warn'd
De Couci ; or his scatter'd bands had ne'er
So soon been marshall'd, and in close array
Led hence as from the field. Hast thou heard aught
That may developé this?

Mon. The guards we set
To watch the city-gates have seized, this morn,
One whose quick fearful glance, and hurried step
Betray'd his guilty purpose. Mark ! he bore
(Amidst the tumult deeming that his flight
Might all unnoticed pass) these scrolls to him,
The fugitive Provençal. Read and judge !

Pro. Where is this messenger?

Mon. Where *should* he be?—
They slew him in their wrath.

Pro. Unwisely done !
Give me the scrolls.

(*He reads.*)

Now, if there be such things
As may to death add sharpness, yet delay
The pang which gives release ; if there be power
In execration, to call down the fires

Of yon avenging heaven, whose rapid shafts
But for such guilt were aimless ; be they heap'd
Upon the traitor's head !—Scorn make his name
Her mark for ever !

Mon. In our passionate blindness,
We send forth curses, whose deep stings recoil
Oft on ourselves.

Pro. Whate'er fate hath of ruin
Fall on his house !—What ! to resign again
That freedom for whose sake our souls have now
Engrain'd themselves in blood !—Why, who is he
That hath devised this treachery ?—To the scroll
Why fix'd he not his name, so stamping it
With an immortal infamy, whose brand
Might warn men from him ?—Who should be so vile ?
Alberti ?—In his eye is that which ever
Shrinks from encountering mine !—But no ! his race
Is of our noblest—Oh ! he could not shame
That high descent !—Urbino ?—Conti ?—No !
They are too deeply pledged.—There's one name more !—
I cannot utter it !—Now shall I read
Each face with cold suspicion, which doth blot
From man's high mien its native royalty,
And seal his noble forehead with the impress
Of its own vile imaginings !—Speak your thoughts,
Montalba ! Guido !—Who should this man be ?

Mon. Why what Sicilian youth unsheath'd, last night,
His sword to aid our foes, and turn'd its edge
Against his country's chiefs ?—He that did *this*,
May well be deem'd for guiltier treason ripe.

Pro. And who is he ?

Mon. Nay, ask thy son.

Pro. My son !

What should *he* know of such a recreant heart ?
Speak, Guido ! thou'rt his friend !

Gui. I would not wear
The brand of such a name !

Pro. How ! what means this ?
A flash of light breaks in upon my soul !
Is it to blast me ?—Yet the fearful doubt
Hath crept in darkness through my thoughts before,
And been flung from them.—Silence !—Speak not yet !
I would be calm, and meet the thunder-burst
With a strong heart.

(*A pause.*)

Now, what have I to hear ?

Your tidings ?

Gui. Briefly, 'twas your son did thus ;
He hath disgraced your name.

Pro. My son did thus !—
Are thy words oracles, that I should search
Their hidden meaning out ?— *What* did my son ?
I have forgot the tale.—Repeat it, quick !

Gui. 'Twill burst upon thee all too soon. While we
Were busy at the dark and solemn rites
Of retribution ; while we bathed the earth
In red libations, which will consecrate
The soil they mingled with to freedom's step
Through the long march of ages ; 'twas *his* task
To shield from danger a Provençal maid,
Sister of him whose cold oppression stung
Our hearts to madness.

Mon. What ! should she be spared
To keep that name from perishing on earth ?—
I cross'd them in their path, and raised my sword
To smite her in her champion's arms.—We fought—
The boy disarm'd me !—And I live to tell
My shame, and wreak my vengeance !

Gui. Who but he
Could warn De Couci, or devise the guilt
These scrolls reveal ?—Hath not the traitor still
Sought, with his fair and specious eloquence,
To win us from our purpose ?—All things seem
Leagued to unmask him.

Mon. Know you not there came,
E'en in the banquet's hour, from this De Couci,
One, bearing unto Eribert the tidings
Of all our purposed deeds !—And have we not
Proof, as the noon-day clear, that Raimond loves
The sister of that tyrant ?

Pro. There was one
Who mourn'd for being childless !—Let him now
Feast o'er his children's graves, and I will join
The revelry !

Mon. (apart). You shall be childless, too !

Pro. Was't you, Montalba ?—Now rejoice ! I say.
There is no name so near you that its stains
Should call the fever'd and indignant blood
To your dark cheek !—But I will dash to earth
The weight that presses on my heart, and then
Be glad as thou art.

Mon. What means this, my lord ?
Who hath seen gladness on Montalba's mien ?

Pro. Why, should not all be glad who have no *sons*

To tarnish their bright name?

Mon. I am not used
To bear with mockery.

Pro. Friend ! By yon high heaven,
I mock thee not !—'tis a proud fate, to live
Alone and unallied.—Why, what's alone ?
A word whose sense is—*free* !—Aye, free from all
The venom'd stings implanted in the heart
By those it loves.—Oh ! I could laugh to think
O' th' joy that riots in baronial halls,
When the word comes—"A son is born !"—*A son* !—
They should say thus—"He that shall knit your brow
To furrows, not of years ; and bid your eye
Quail its proud glance ; to tell the earth its shame,—
Is born, and so, rejoice !"—*Then* might we feast,
And know the cause :—Were it not excellent ?

Mon. This is all idle. There are deeds to do ;
Arouse thee, Procida !

Pro. Why, am I not
Calm as immortal justice ?—She can strike,
And yet be passionless—and thus will I.
I know thy meaning.—Deeds to do !—'tis well.
They shall be done ere thought on.—Go ye forth ;
There is a youth who calls himself my son,
His name is—Raimond—in his eye is light
That shows like truth—but be not ye deceived !
Bear him in chains before us. We will sit
To-day in judgment, and the skies shall see
The strength which girds our nature.—Will not this
Be glorious, brave Montalba ?—Linger not,
Ye tardy messengers ! for there are things
Which ask the speed of storms. [*Exeunt GUIDO and others.*
Is not this well ?

Mon. 'Tis noble. Keep thy spirit to this proud height,
[*Aside*

And then—be desolate like me !—my woes
Will at the thought grow light.

Pro. What now remains
To be prepared ?—There should be solemn pomp
To grace a day like this.—Aye, breaking hearts
Require a drapery to conceal their throbs
From cold inquiring eyes ; and it must be
Ample and rich, that so their gaze may not
Explore what lies beneath.

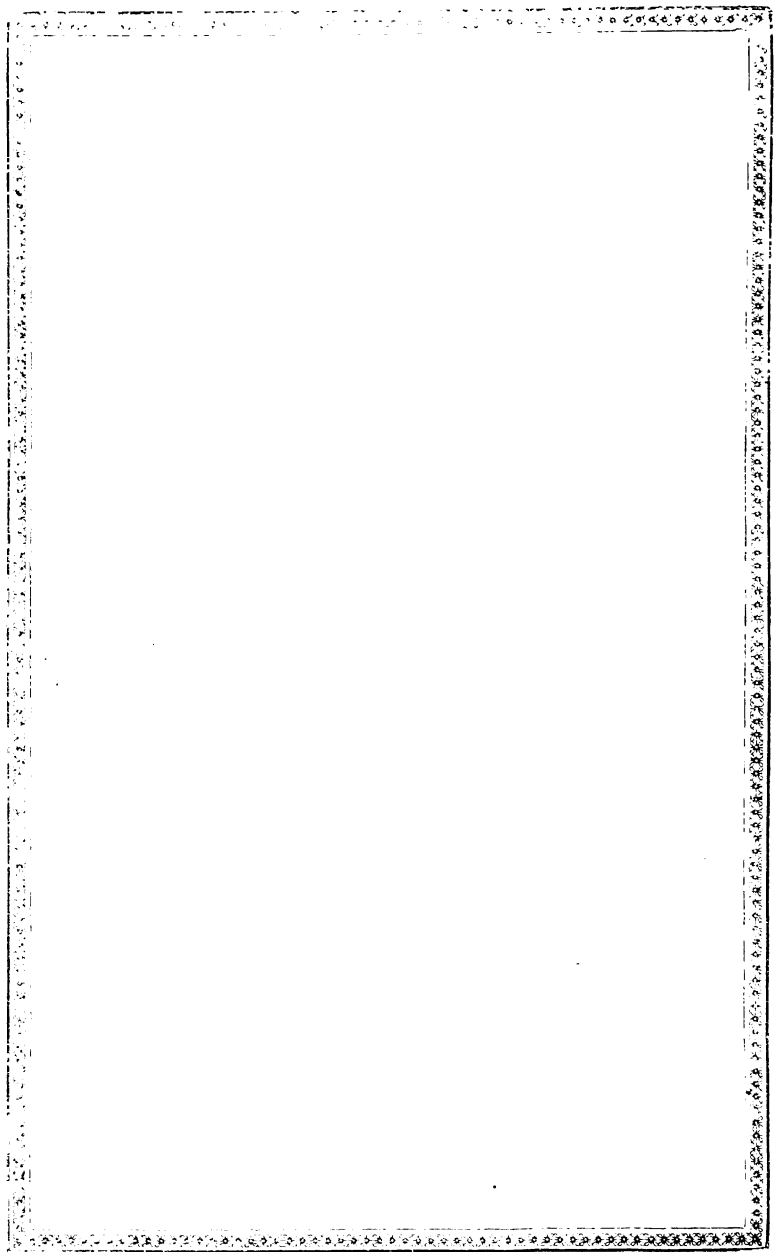
[*Exit PROCIDA.*

Mon. Now this is well !—
I hate this Procida ; for he hath won
In all our councils that ascendancy



Constance.—"Forgive me, father! that I bring
Earth's restless griefs and passions to disturb
The stillness of thy holy solitude."

[A. 302.]



The Vespers of Palermo.

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And mastery o'er bold hearts, which should have been
Mine by a thousand claims.—Had *he* the strength
Of wrongs like mine?—No ! for that name—his country—
He strikes—*my* vengeance hath a deeper fount :
But there's dark joy in this !—And fate hath barr'd
My soul from every other. [Exit MONTALBA.

SCENE II.—*A Hermitage, surrounded by the Ruins of an ancient Temple.*

CONSTANCE. ANSELMO.

Con. 'Tis strange he comes not !—Is not this the still
And sultry hour of noon ?—He should have been
Here by the day-break.—Was there not a voice ?—
No ! 'tis the shrill Cicada, with glad life
Peopling these marble ruins, as it sports
Amidst them, in the sun.—Hark ! yet again !
No ! no !—Forgive me, father ! that I bring
Earth's restless griefs and passions to disturb
The stillness of thy holy solitude ;
My heart is full of care.

Ans. There is no place
So hallow'd, as to be unvisited
By mortal cares. Nay, whither should we go,
With our deep griefs and passions, but to scenes
Lonely and still ; where he that made our hearts
Will speak to them in whispers ? I have known
Affliction too, my daughter.

Con. Hark ! his step !
I know it well—he comes—my Raimond, welcome !

(VITTORIA enters, CONSTANCE shrinks back on perceiving her.)

Oh heaven ! that aspect tells a fearful tale.

Vit. (not observing her). There is a cloud of horror on my
soul ;

And on thy words, Anselmo, peace doth wait,
Even as an echo, following the sweet close
Of some divine and solemn harmony :
Therefore I sought thee now. Oh ! speak to me
Of holy things, and names, in whose deep sound
Is power to bid the tempest of the heart
Sink, like a storm rebuked.

Ans. What recent grief
Darkens thy spirit thus?

Vit. I said not grief.
We should rejoice to-day, but joy is not
That which it hath been. In the flowers which wreath
Its mantling cup there is a scent unknown,
Fraught with some strange delirium. All things now
Have changed their nature; still, I say, rejoice!
There is a cause, Anselmo!—We are free,
Free and avenged!—Yet on my soul there hangs
A darkness, heavy as th' oppressive gloom
Of midnight phantasies.—Aye, for this, too,
There is a cause.

Ans. How say'st thou, we are free?
There may have raged, within Palermo's walls,
Some brief wild tumult, but too well I know
They call the stranger, lord.

Vit. Who calls the *dead*
Conqueror or lord?—Hush! breathe it not aloud,
The wild winds must not hear it!—Yet, again,
I tell thee, we are free!

Ans. Thine eye hath look'd
On fearful deeds, for still their shadows hang
O'er its dark orb.—Speak! I adjure thee, say,
How hath this work been wrought?

Vit. Peace! ask me not!
Why shouldst *thou* hear a tale to send thy blood
Back on its fount?—We cannot wake them now!
The storm is in my soul, but *they* are all
At rest!—Aye, sweetly may the slaughter'd babe
By its dead mother sleep; and warlike men
Who 'midst the slain have slumber'd oft before,
Making the shield their pillow, may repose
Well, now their toils are done.—Is't not enough?

Con. Merciful Heaven! have such things been? And
There is no shade come o'er the laughing sky!—
I am an outcast now.

Ans. O Thou, whose ways
Clouds mantle fearfully; of all the blind,
But terrible, ministers that work thy wrath,
How much is *man* the fiercest!—Others know
Their limits—Yes! the earthquakes, and the storms,
And the volcanoes!—He alone o'erleaps
The bounds of retribution!—Couldst thou gaze,
Vittoria! with thy woman's heart and eye,
On such dread scenes unmoved?

Vit. Was it for *me*

To stay th' avenging sword?—No, though it pierced
My very soul !—Hark, hark, what thrilling shrieks
Ring through the air around me !—Can'st thou not
Bid them be hush'd ?—Oh ! look not on me thus !

Ans. Lady, thy thoughts lend sternness to the looks
Which are but sad !—Have all then perish'd ? *all !*
Was there no mercy ?

Vit. Mercy ! it hath been
A word forbidden as th' unhallowed names
Of evil powers.—Yet one there was who dared
To own the guilt of pity, and to aid
The victims ; but in vain.—Of him no more !
He is a traitor, and a traitor's death
Will be his meed.

Con. (*coming forward*). Oh Heaven !—his name, his
Is it—it cannot be !

Vit. (*starting*). Thou here, pale girl !
I deem'd thee with the dead !—How hast thou 'scaped
The snare ?—Who saved thee, last of all thy race ?
Was it not he of whom I spake e'en now,
Raimond di Procida ?

Con. It is enough.
Now the storm breaks upon me, and I sink !
Must he, too, die ?

Vit. Is it ev'n so ?—Why then,
Live on—thou hast the arrow at thy heart !
Fix not on me thy sad reproachful eyes,
I mean not to betray thee. Thou may'st live !
Why should death bring thee his oblivious balms ?
He visits but the happy.—Didst thou ask
If Raimond too must die ?—It is as sure
As that his blood is on *thy* head, for thou
Didst win him to this treason.

Con. When did man
Call mercy, *treason* !—Take my life, but save
My noble Raimond !

Vit. Maiden ! he must die.
E'en now the youth before his judges stands,
And they are men who, to the voice of prayer,
Are as the rock is to the murmur'd sigh
Of summer-waves ; aye, though a father sit
On their tribunal. Bend thou not to me.
What wouldst thou ?

Con. Mercy !—Oh ! wert thou to plead
But with a look, e'en yet he might be saved !
If thou hast ever loved—

Vit. If I have loved ?

It is *that* love forbids me to relent ;
 I am what it hath made me.—O'er my soul
 Lightning hath pass'd, and sear'd it. Could I weep,
 I then might pity— but it will not be.

Con. Oh ! thou wilt yet relent, for woman's heart
 Was formed to suffer and to melt.

Vit. Away !

Why should I pity thee ?—Thou wilt but prove
 What I have known before—and yet I live !
 Nature is strong, and it may all be borne—
 The sick impatient yearning of the heart
 For that which is not ; and the weary sense
 Of the dull void, wherewith our homes have been
 Circled by death ; yes, all things may be borne !
 All, save remorse.—But I will *not* bow down
 My spirit to that dark power :—there *was* no guilt !
 Anselmo ! wherefore didst thou talk of guilt ?

Ans. Aye, thus doth sensitive conscience quicken thought,
 Lending reproachful voices to a breeze,
 Keen lightning to a look.

Vit. Leave me in peace !

Is't not enough that I should have a sense
 Of things thou canst not see, all wild and dark,
 And of unearthly whispers, haunting me
 With dread suggestions, but that *thy* cold words,
 Old man, should gall me too ?—Must all conspire
 Against me ?—Oh ! thou beautiful spirit ! wont
 To shine upon my dreams with looks of love,
 Where art *thou* vanish'd ?—Was it not the thought
 Of thee which urged me to the fearful task,
 And wilt thou now forsake me ?—I must seek
 The shadowy woods again, for there, perchance,
 Still may thy voice be in my twilight-paths ;—
 Here I but meet despair ! [Exit VITTORIA]

Ans. (to CONSTANCE). Despair not *thou*,
 My daughter !—he that purifies the heart
 With grief, will lend it strength.

Con. (endeavouring to rouse herself). Did she not say
 That some one was to die ?

Ans. I tell thee not

Thy pangs are vain—for nature will have way.
 Earth must have tears ; yet in a heart like thine,
 Faith may not yield its place.

Con. Have I not heard
 Some fearful tale ?—Who said, that there should rest
 Blood on my soul ?—What blood ?—I never bore
 Hatred, kind father, unto aught that breathes ;

Raimond doth know it well.—Raimond !—High heaven,
It bursts upon me now !—and he must die !
For my sake—e'en for mine !

Ans. Her words were strange,
And her proud mind seem'd half to frenzy wrought—
Perchance this may not be.

Con. It *must* not be.

Why do I linger here ?

[*She rises to depart.*

Ans. Where wouldst thou go ?

Con. To give their stern and unrelenting hearts
A victim in his stead.

Ans. Stay ! wouldst thou rush
On certain death ?

Con. I may not falter now,—
Is not the life of woman all bound up
In her affections ?—What hath *she* to do
In this bleak world alone ?—It may be well
For *man* on his triumphal course to move
Uncumber'd by soft bonds ; but *we* were born
For love and grief.

Ans. Thou fair and gentle thing,
Unused to meet a glance which doth not speak
Of tenderness or homage ! how shouldst *thou*
Bear the hard aspect of un pitying men,
Or face the king of terrors ?

Con. There is strength
Deep bedded in our hearts, of which we reck
But little, till the shafts of Heaven have pierced
Its fragile dwelling.—Must not earth be rent
Before her gems are found ?—Oh ! now I feel
Worthy the generous love which hath not shunn'd
To look on death for me !—My heart hath given
Birth to as deep a courage, and a faith
As high in its devotion. [Exit CONSTANCE.

Ans. She is gone !
Is it to perish ?—God of mercy ! lend
Power to my voice, that so its prayer may save
This pure and lofty creature !—I will follow—
But her young footstep and heroic heart
Will bear her to destruction faster far
Than I can track her path.

[Exit ANSELMO.

SCENE III.—*Hall of a Public Building.*

PROCIDA, MONTALBA, GUIDO, and others, seated as on a Tribunal.

Pro. The morn lower'd darkly, but the sun hath now,
With fierce and angry splendour, through the clouds
Burst forth, as if impatient to behold
This, our high triumph.—Lead the prisoner in.

(*RAIMOND is brought in fettered and guarded.*)

Why, what a bright and fearless brow is here !—
Is this man guilty?—Look on him, Montalba?

Mon. Be firm. Should justice falter at a look?

Pro. No, thou say'st well. Her eyes are filleted,
Or should be so. Thou, that dost call thyself—
But no ! I will not breathe a traitor's name—
Speak ! thou art arraign'd of treason.

Rai. I arraign

You, before whom I stand, of darker guilt,
In the bright face of heaven ; and your own hearts
Give echo to the charge. Your very looks
Have ta'en the stamp of crime, and seem to shrink,
With a perturb'd and haggard wildness, back
From the too-searching light.—Why, what hath wrought
This change on noble brows?—There is a voice,
With a deep answer, rising from the blood
Your hands have coldly shed !—Ye are of those
From whom just men recoil, with curdling veins,
All thrill'd by life's abhorrent consciousness,
And sensitive feeling of a *murderer's* presence.—
Away ! come down from your tribunal-seat,
Put off your robes of state, and let your mien
Be pale and humbled ; for ye bear about you
That which repugnant earth doth sicken at,
More than the pestilence.—That I should live
To see my father shrink !

Pro. Montalba, speak !

There's something chokes my voice—but fear me not.

Mon. If we must plead to vindicate our acts,
Be it when thou hast made thine own look clear !
Most eloquent youth ! What answer canst thou make
To this our charge of treason ?

Rai. I will plead
That cause before a mightier judgment-throne,
Where mercy is not guilt. But here, I feel
Too buoyantly the glory and the joy
Of my free spirit's whiteness; for e'en now
Th' embodied hideousness of crime doth seem
Before me glaring out.—Why, I saw *thee*,
Thy foot upon an aged warrior's breast,
Trampling our nature's last convulsive heavings.—
And thou—*thy* sword—Oh! valiant chief!—is yet
Red from the noble stroke which pierced, at once,
A mother and the babe, whose little life
Was from her bosom drawn!—Immortal deeds
For bards to hymn!

Gui. (aside). I look upon his mien,
And waver.—Can it be?—My boyish heart
Deem'd him so noble once!—Away, weak thoughts!
Why should I shrink, as if the guilt were *mine*,
From his proud glance?

Pro. Oh, thou dissembler!—thou,
So skill'd to clothe with virtue's generous flush
The hollow cheek of cold hypocrisy,
That, with thy guilt made manifest, I can scarce
Believe thee guilty!—look on me, and say
Whose was the secret warning voice, that saved
De Couci with his bands, to join our foes,
And forge new fetters for th' indignant land?
Whose was *this* treachery?

[Shows him papers.]

Who hath promised here,
(Belike to appease the manes of the dead,)
At midnight to unfold Palermo's gates,
And welcome in the foe?—Who hath done this,
But thou, a tyrant's friend?

Rai. Who hath done this?
Father!—if I may call thee by that name—
Look, with thy piercing eye, on those whose smiles
Were masks that hid their daggers.—*There*, perchance,
May lurk what loves not light too strong. For me,
I know but this—there needs no deep research
To prove the truth—that murderers may be traitors
E'en to each other.

Pro. (to MONTALBA). His unaltering cheek
Still vividly doth hold its natural hue,
And his eye quails not!—Is this innocence?

Mon. No! 'tis th' unshrinking hardihood of crime.—
Thou bear'st a gallant mien!—But where is she
Whom thou hast barter'd fame and life to save,

The fair Provençal maid?—What ! know'st thou not
That this alone were guilt, to death allied?
Was't not our law that he who spared a foe
(And is she not of that detested race?)
Should thenceforth be amongst us as a foe?—
Where hast thou borne her?—speak !

Rai. That Heaven, whose eye
Burns up thy soul with its far-searching glance,
Is with her ; she is safe.

Pro. And by that word
Thy doom is seal'd.—Oh God ! that I had died
Before this bitter hour, in the full strength
And glory of my heart !

CONSTANCE *enters, and rushes to RAIMOND.*

Con. Oh ! art thou found?—
But yet, to find thee thus !—Chains, chains for *thee* !
My brave, my noble love !—Off with these bonds ;
Let him be free as air :—for I am come
To be your victim now.

Rai. Death has no pang
More keen than this.—Oh ! wherefore art thou here?
I could have died so calmly, deeming thee
Saved, and at peace.

Con. At peace !—And thou hast thought
Thus poorly of my love !—But woman's breast
Hath strength to suffer too.—Thy father sits
On this tribunal ; Raimond, which is he ?

Rai. My father !—who hath lull'd thy gentle heart
With that false hope ?—Beloved ! gaze around—
See, if thine eye can trace a father's soul
In the dark looks bent on us.

CONSTANCE, *after earnestly examining the countenances of the judges, falls at the feet of PROCIDA.*

Con. Thou art he !
Nay, turn thou not away !—for I beheld
Thy proud lip quiver, and a watery mist
Pass o'er thy troubled eye ; and then I knew
Thou wert his father !—Spare him !—take *my* life,
In truth a worthless sacrifice for his,
But yet mine all.—Oh ! *he* hath still to run
A long bright race of glory.

Rai. Constance, peace !
I look upon thee, and my failing heart
Is as a broken reed.

Con. (*still addressing PROCIDA*). Oh, yet relent !
If 'twas his crime to rescue *me*, behold
I come to be the atonement ! Let him live
To crown thine age with honour.—In thy heart
There's a deep conflict ; but great nature pleads
With an o'ermastering voice, and thou wilt yield !—
Thou *art* his father !

Pro. (*after a pause*). Maiden thou'rt deceived !
I am as calm as that dead pause of nature
Ere the full thunder bursts.—A judge is not
Father or friend. Who calls this man my son ?—
My son !—Aye ! thus his mother proudly smiled—
But she was noble !—Traitors stand alone,
Loosed from all ties.—Why should I trifle thus ?—
Bear her away !

Rai. (*starting forward*). And whither ?

Mon. Unto death.

Why should she live when all her race have perish'd !

Con. (*sinking into the arms of RAIMOND*). Raimond,
farewell !—Oh ! when thy star hath risen
To its bright noon, forget not, best beloved,
I died for thee !

Rai. High heaven ! thou seest these things ;
And yet endur'st them !—Shalt thou die for me,
Purest and loveliest being ?—but our fate
May not divide us long.—Her cheek is cold—
Her deep blue eyes are closed—Should this be death !—
If thus, there yet were mercy !—Father, father !
Is thy heart human ?

Pro. Bear her hence, I say !
Why must my soul be torn ?

ANSELMO enters, holding a crucifix.

Ans. Now, by this sign
Of Heaven's prevailing love, ye shall not harm
One ringlet of her head.—How ! is there not
Enough of blood upon your burthen'd souls ?
Will not the visions of your midnight couch
Be wild and dark enough, but ye must heap
Crime upon crime ?—Be ye content :—your dreams,
Your councils, and your banquetings, will yet
Be haunted by the voice which doth not sleep,
E'en though this maid be spared !—Constance, look up !
Thou shalt not die.

Rai. Oh ! death e'en now hath veil'd

The light of her soft beauty.—Wake, my love—
Wake at my voice!

Pro. Anselmo, lead her hence,
And let her live, but never meet my sight.—
Begone!—My heart will burst.

Rai. One last embrace!—
Again life's rose is opening on her cheek;
Yet must we part.—So love is crush'd on earth!
But there are brighter worlds!—Farewell, farewell!

[*He gives her to the care of ANSELMO.*

Con. (*slowly recovering*). There was a voice which call'd
me.—Am I not

A spirit freed from earth?—Have I not pass'd
The bitterness of death?

Ans. Oh, haste away!

Con. Yes! Raimond calls me.—He too is released
From his cold bondage.—We are free at last,
And all is well—Away! [*She is led out by ANSELMO.*

Rai. The pang is o'er,
And I have but to die.

Mon. Now, Procida,
Comes thy great task. Wake! summon to thine aid
All thy deep soul's commanding energies;
For thou—a chief among us—must pronounce
The sentence of thy son. It rests with thee.

Pro. Ha! ha!—Men's hearts should be of softer mould
Than in the elder time.—Fathers could doom
Their children *then* with an unfaltering voice,
And we must tremble thus!—Is it not said,
That nature grows degenerate, earth being now
So full of days?

Mon. Rouse up thy mighty heart.

Pro. Aye, thou say'st right. There yet are souls which tower
As landmarks to mankind.—Well, what's the task?—
There is a man to be condemn'd, you say?
Is he then guilty?

All. This we deem of him
With one accord.

Pro. And hath he nought to plead?

Rai. Nought but a soul unstain'd.

Pro. Why, that is little.
Stains on the soul are but as conscience deems them,
And conscience may be sear'd.—But, for this sentence!—
Was't not the penalty imposed on man,
E'en from creation's dawn, that he must die?—
It was: thus making guilt a sacrifice
Unto eternal justice; and we but

Obey heaven's mandate, when we cast dark souls
To th' elements from amongst us.—Be it so !
Such be *his* doom !—I have said. Aye, now my heart
Is girt with adamant, whose cold weight doth press
Its gaspings down.—Off ! let me breathe in freedom !—
Mountains are on my breast ! *[He sinks back.*

Mon. Guards, bear the prisoner
Back to his dungeon.

Rai. Father ! oh, look up
Thou art my father still !

GUIDO, leaving the Tribunal, throws himself on the neck of
RAIMOND.

Gui. Oh ! Raimond, Raimond !
If it should be that I have wrong'd thee, say
Thou dost forgive me.

Rai. Friend of my young days,
So may all-pitying heaven ! *[RAIMOND is led out.*

Pro. Whose voice was that ?
Where is he ?—gone ?—now I may breathe once more
In the free air of heaven. Let us away. *[Exeunt omnes.*

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I.—*A Prison, dimly lighted.*

RAIMOND sleeping. PROCIDA enters.

Pro. *(gazing upon him earnestly).* Can he then sleep ?—Th'
o'ershadowing night hath wrapt
Earth, at her stated hours—the stars have set
Their burning watch ; and all things hold their course
Of wakefulness and rest ; yet hath not sleep
Sat on mine eyelids since—but this avails not !—
And thus *he* slumbers !—Why this mien doth seem
As if its soul were but one lofty thought
Of an immortal destiny !—his brow
Is calm as waves whereon the midnight heavens
Are imaged silently.—Wake, Raimond, wake !
Thy rest is deep.

Rai. *(starting up).* My father !—Wherefore here ?
I am prepared to die, yet would I not
Fall by *thy* hand.

Pro. 'Twas not for *this* I came.

Rai. Then wherefore?—and upon thy lofty brow
Why burns the troubled flush?

Pro. Perchance 'tis shame.

Yes! it may well be shame!—for I have striven
With nature's feebleness, and been o'erpower'd.—
Howe'er it be, 'tis not for *thee* to gaze,
Noting it thus. Rise, let me loose thy chains.
Arise, and follow me; but let thy step
Fall without sound on earth: I have prepared
The means for thy escape.

Rai. What! *thou!* the austere,
The inflexible Procida! hast *thou* done this,
Deeming me guilty still?

Pro. Upbraid me not!

It is even so. There have been nobler deeds
By Roman fathers done,—but I am weak.
Therefore, again I say, arise! and haste,
For the night wanes. Thy fugitive course must be
To realms beyond the deep; so let us part
In silence, and for ever.

Rai. Let *him* fly

Who holds no deep asylum in his breast,
Wherein to shelter from the scoffs of men!—
I can sleep calmly here.

Pro. Art thou in love

With death and infamy, that so thy choice
Is made, lost boy! when freedom courts thy grasp?

Rai. Father! to set th' irrevocable seal

Upon that shame wherewith ye have branded me,
There needs but flight.—What should I bear from this,
My native land?—A blighted name, to rise
And part me, with its dark remembrances,
For ever from the sunshine!—O'er my soul
Bright shadowings of a nobler destiny
Float in dim beauty through the gloom; but here,
On earth, my hopes are closed.

Pro. Thy hopes are closed!

And what were they to mine?—Thou wilt not fly!
Why, let all traitors flock to thee, and learn
How proudly guilt can talk!—Let fathers rear
Their offspring henceforth, as the free wild birds
Foster their young; when these can mount alone,
Dissolving nature's bonds—why should it not
Be so with us?

Rai. Oh, father!—Now I feel

What high prerogatives belong to death.
He hath a deep though voiceless eloquence,

To which I leave my cause. His solemn veil
Doth with mysterious beauty clothe our virtues,
And in its vast, oblivious fold, for ever
Give shelter to our faults.—When I am gone,
The mists of passion which have dimm'd my name
Will melt like day-dreams ; and my memory then
Will be—not what it *should* have been—for I
Must pass without my fame—but yet, unstain'd
As a clear morning dew-drop. Oh ! the grave
Hath rights inviolate as a sanctuary's,
And they should be my own !

Pro. Now, by just Heaven,
I will not thus be tortured !—Were my heart
But of thy guilt or innocence assured,
I could be calm again. But, in this wild
Suspense,—this conflict and vicissitude
Of opposite feelings and convictions—What !
Hath it been mine to temper and to bend
All spirits to my purpose ; have I raised
With a severe and passionless energy,
From the dread mingling of their elements,
Storms which have rock'd the earth ?—And shall I now
Thus fluctuate, as a feeble reed, the scorn
And plaything of the winds ?—Look on me, boy !
Guilt never dared to meet these eyes, and keep
Its heart's dark secret close.—Oh, pitying Heaven !
Speak to my soul with some dread oracle,
And tell me which is truth.

Rai. I will not plead.
I will not call th' Omnipotent to attest
My innocence. No, father, in thy heart
I know my birthright shall be soon restored ;
Therefore I look to death, and bid thee speed
The great absolver.

Pro. Oh ! my son, my son !
We will not part in wrath !—the sternest hearts,
Within their proud and guarded fastnesses,
Hide something still, round which their tendrils cling
With a close grasp, unknown to those who dress
Their love in smiles. And such wert thou to me !
The all which taught me that my soul was cast
In nature's mould.—And I must now hold on
My desolate course alone !—Why, be it thus !
He that doth guide a nation's star, should dwell
High o'er the clouds in regal solitude,
Sufficient to himself.

Rai. Yet, on that summit,

When with her bright wings glory shadows thee,
Forget not him who coldly sleeps beneath,
Yet might have soar'd as high!

Pro. No, fear thou not!

Thou'lt be remember'd long. The canker-worm
O' th' heart is ne'er forgotten.

Rai. Oh! not thus—

I would not *thus* be thought of.

Pro. Let me deem

Again that thou art base!—for thy bright looks,
Thy glorious mien of fearlessness and truth,
Then would not haunt me as th' avenging powers
Follow'd the parricide.—Farewell, farewell!
I have no tears.—Oh! thus thy mother look'd,
When, with a sad, yet half-triumphant smile,
All radiant with deep meaning, from her death-bed
She gave thee to my arms.

Rai. Now death has lost

His sting, since thou believ'st me innocent.

Pro. (*wildly*). Thou innocent!—Am I thy murderer then?

Away! I tell thee thou hast made my name
A scorn to men!—No! I will *not* forgive thee;
A traitor!—What! the blood of Procida
Filling a traitor's veins!—Let the earth drink it;
Thou wouldst receive our foes!—but they shall meet
From thy perfidious lips a welcome, cold
As death can make it.—Go, prepare thy soul!

Rai. Father! yet hear me!

Pro. No! thou'rt skill'd to make
E'en shame look fair.—Why should I linger thus?

(*Going to leave the prison he turns back for a moment.*)

If there be aught—if aught—for which thou need'st
Forgiveness—not of me, but that dread power
From whom no heart is veil'd—delay thou not
Thy prayer:—Time hurries on.

Rai. I am prepared.

Pro. 'Tis well.

[*Exit PROCIDA.*]

Rai. Men talk of torture!—Can they wreak
Upon the sensitive and shrinking frame,
Half the mind bears, and lives?—My spirit feels
Bewilder'd; on its powers this twilight gloom
Hangs like a weight of earth.—It should be morn;
Why, then, perchance, a beam of Heaven's bright sun
Hath pierced, ere now, the grating of my dungeon,
Telling of hope and mercy!

[*Exit into an inner cell*]

SCENE II.—*A Street of Palermo.*

Many CITIZENS assembled.

First Cit. The morning breaks ; his time is almost come :
Will he be led this way ?

Second Cit. Ay, so 'tis said,
To die before that gate through which he purposed
The foe should enter in.

Third Cit. 'Twas a vile plot !
And yet I would my hands were pure as his
From the deep stain of blood. Didst hear the sounds
I' th' air last night ?

Second Cit. Since the great work of slaughter,
Who hath not heard them duly, at those hours
Which should be silent ?

Third Cit. Oh ! the fearful mingling,
The terrible mimicry of human voices,
In every sound which to the heart doth speak
Of woe and death.

Second Cit. Ay, there was woman's shrill
And piercing cry ; and the low feeble wail
Of dying infants ; and the half-suppress'd
Deep groan of man in his last agonies !
And now and then there swell'd upon the breeze
Strange, savage bursts of laughter, wilder far
Than all the rest.

First Cit. Of our own fate, perchance,
These awful midnight wailings may be deem'd
An ominous prophecy.—Should France regain
Her power amongst us, doubt not, we shall have
Stern reckoners to account with.—Hark !

(The sound of trumpets is heard at a distance.)

Second Cit. 'Twas but
A rushing of the breeze.

Third Cit. E'en now, 'tis said,
The hostile bands approach.

(The sound is heard gradually drawing nearer.)

Second Cit. Again !—that sound
Was no illusion. Nearer yet it swells—
They come, they come !

PROCIDA enters.

Pro. The foe is at your gates ;
But hearts and hands prepared shall meet his onset :
Why are ye loitering here ?

Cits. My lord, we came——

Pro. Think ye I know not wherefore ?—'twas to see
A fellow-being die !—Ay, 'tis a sight
Man loves to look on, and the tenderest hearts
Recoil, and yet withdraw not, from the scene.
For *this* ye came—What ! is our nature fierce,
Or is there that in mortal agony,
From which the soul, exulting in its strength,
Doth learn immortal lessons ?—Hence, and arm !
Ere the night dews descend, ye will have seen
Enough of death ; for this must be a day
Of battle !—'Tis the hour which troubled souls
Delight in, for its rushing storms are wings
Which bear them up !—Arm, arm ! 'tis for your homes,
And all that lends them loveliness—Away ? [Exeunt.

SCENE III.—Prison of RAIMOND.

RAIMOND. ANSELMO.

Rai. And Constance then is safe !—Heaven bless thee, father;
Good angels bear such comfort.

Ans. I have found

A safe asylum for thine honour'd love,
Where she may dwell until serener days,
With Saint Rosolia's gentlest daughters ; those
Whose hallow'd office is to tend the bed
Of pain and death, and soothe the parting soul
With their soft hymns : and therefore are they call'd
"Sisters of Mercy."

Rai. Oh ! that name, my Constance,
Befits thee well ! E'en in our happiest days,
There was a depth of tender pensiveness,
Far in thine eyes' dark azure, speaking ever
Of pity and mild grief.—Is she at peace ?

Ans. Alas ! what should I say.

Rai. Why did I ask ?
Knowing the deep and full devotedness
Of her young heart's affections ?—Oh ! the thought



Raimond.— ". . . No, *one* is left,
Shut out from glory's race !"

[*p.* 320.]

All, all Palermo's youth !—No, *one* is left,
 Shut out from glory's race !—They are gone forth !—
 Ay ! now the soul of battle is abroad,
 It burns upon the air !—The joyous winds
 Are tossing warrior-plumes, the proud white foam
 Of battle's roaring billows !—On my sight
 The vision bursts—it maddens ! 'tis the flash,
 The lightning-shock of lances, and the cloud
 Of rushing arrows, and the broad full blaze
 Of helmets in the sun !—The very steed
 With his majestic rider glorying shares
 The hour's stern joy, and waves his floating mane
 As a triumphant banner !—Such things are
 Even now—and I am here !

Ans. Alas, be calm !

To the same grave ye press,—thou that dost pine
 Beneath a weight of chains,—and they that rule
 The fortunes of the fight.

Rai. Ay ! *Thou* canst feel

The calm thou wouldst impart, for unto thee
 All men alike, the warrior and the slave,
 Seem, as thou say'st, but pilgrims, pressing on
 To the same bourne.—Yet call it not the same !
Their graves, who fall in this day's fight, will be
 As altars to their country, visited
 By fathers with their children, bearing wreaths,
 And chanting hymns in honour of the dead :
 Will mine be such ?

VITTORIA rushes in wildly, as if pursued.

Vit. Anselmo ! art thou found !
 Haste, haste, or all is lost ! Perchance thy voice,
 Whereby they deem Heaven speaks, thy lifted cross,
 And prophet-mien, may stay the fugitives,
 Or shame them back to die.

Ans. The fugitives !

What words are these ?—the sons of Sicily
 Fly not before the foe ?

Vit. That I should say

It is too true !

Ans. And thou—thou bleedest, lady !

Vit. Peace ! heed not me, when Sicily is lost !
 I stood upon the walls, and watch'd our bands,
 As, with their ancient, royal banner spread,
 Onward they march'd. The combat was begun,
 The fiery impulse given, and valiant men

Had seal'd their freedom with their blood—when lo !
That false Alberti led his recreant vassals
To join th' invader's host.

Rai. His country's curse
Rest on the slave for ever !

Vit. Then distrust
E'en of their nobler leaders, and dismay,
That swift contagion, on Palermo's bands
Came like a deadly blight. They fled !—Oh, shame !
E'en now they fly !—Ay, through the city gates
They rush, as if all Etna's burning streams
Pursued their winged steps !

Rai. Thou hast not named
Their chief—Di Procida—*He* doth not fly ?

Vit. No ! like a kingly lion in the toils,
Daring the hunters yet, he proudly strives,
But all in vain ! The few that breast the storm,
With Guido and Montalba, by his side,
Fight but for graves upon the battle-field.

Rai. And I am *here* !—Shall there be power, O God !
In the roused energies of fierce despair,
To burst my heart—and not to rend my chains ?
Oh, for one moment of the thunderbolt
To set the strong man free !

Vit. (after gazing upon him earnestly). Why, 'twere a deed
Worthy the fame and blessing of all time,
To loose thy bonds, thou son of Prociča !
Thou art no traitor :—from thy kindled brow
Looks out thy lofty soul !—Arise ! go forth !
And rouse the noble heart of Sicily
Unto high deeds again. Anselmo, haste ;
Unbind him ! Let my spirit still prevail,
Ere I depart—for the strong hand of death
Is on me now.— [She sinks back against a pillar.

Ans. Oh, Heaven ! the life-blood streams
Fast from thy heart—thy troubled eyes grow dim.
Who hath done this ?

Vit. Before the gates I stood,
And in the name of him, the loved and lost,
With whom I soon shall be, all vainly strove
To stay the shameful flight. Then from the foe,
Fraught with my summons to his viewless home,
Came the fleet shaft which pierced me.

Ans. Yet, oh yet,
It may not be too late. Help, help !

Vit. Away !
Bright is the hour which brings me liberty !

The Vespers of Palermo.

ATTENDANTS enter.

Haste, be those fetters riven !—Unbar the gates,
And set the captive free ! [*The ATTENDANTS seem to hesitate.*

Know ye not *her*

Who should have worn your country's diadem ?

Atten. Oh, lady, we obey.

[*They take off RAIMOND'S chains. He springs up exultingly.*

Rai. Is this no dream ?—

Mount, eagle ! thou art free !—Shall I then die,
Not 'midst the mockery of insulting crowds,
But on the field of banners, where the brave
Are striving for an immortality ?—
It is e'en so !—Now for bright arms of proof,
A helm, a keen-edged falchion, and e'en yet
My father may be saved !

Vit. Away, be strong !

And let thy battle-word, to rule the storm,
Be *Conradin* !

[*He rushes out.*

Oh ! for one hour of life
To hear that name blent with the exulting shout
Of victory !—'twill not be !—A mightier power
Doth summon me away.

Ans. To purer worlds

Raise thy last thoughts in hope.

Vit. Yes ! *he* is there,

All glorious in his beauty !—*Conradin* !
Death parted us—and death shall re-unite !—
He will not stay—it is all darkness now ;
Night gathers o'er my spirit.

[*She dies.*

Ans. She is gone.

It is an awful hour which stills the heart

That beat so proudly once.—Have mercy, Heaven !

[*He kneels beside her.*

(*The scene closes.*)

SCENE IV.—*Before the gates of Palermo.*

SICILIANS flying tumultuously towards the Gates.

Voices (without). Montjoy ! Montjoy ! St. Denis for Anjou !
Provençals on !

Sic. Fly, fly, or all is lost !

RAIMOND *appears in the gateway, armed, and carrying a banner.*

Rai. Back, back, I say ! ye men of Sicily !
All is not lost ! Oh, shame !—A few brave hearts
In such a cause, ere now, have set their breasts
Against the rush of thousands, and sustain'd,
And made the shock recoil.—Ay, man, free man,
Still to be call'd so, hath achieved such deeds
As Heaven and earth have marvell'd at ; and souls,
Whose spark yet slumbers with the days to come
Shall burn to hear : transmitting brightly thus
Freedom from race to race !—Back ! or prepare,
Amidst your hearths, your bowers, your very shrines,
To bleed and die in vain !—Turn, follow me !
Conradin, Conradin !—for Sicily
His spirit fights !—Remember Conradin !

[*They begin to rally around him.*

Ay, this is well !—Now follow me, and charge !

[*The PROVENÇALS rush in, but are repulsed by the
SICILIANS.*

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.—*Part of the Field of Battle.*

MONTALBA *enters wounded, and supported by RAIMOND, whose
face is concealed by his helmet.*

Rai. Here rest thee, warrior.

Mon. Rest, ay, death is rest,
And such will soon be mine—But thanks to thee,
I shall not die a captive. Brave Sicilian !
These lips are all unused to soothing words,
Or I should bless the valour which hath won
For my last hour, the proud free solitude
Wherewith my soul would gird itself.—Thy name ?

Rai. 'Twill be no music to thine ear, Montalba.
Gaze—read it thus ! [*He lifts the visor of his helmet.*

Mon. Raimond di Procida !

Rai. Thou hast pursued me with a bitter hate.
But fare thee well ! Heaven's peace be with thy soul !
I must away—One glorious effort more
And this proud field is won !

[*Exit RAIMOND.*

Mon. Am I thus humbled?
 How my heart sinks within me? But 'tis death
 (And he can tame the mightiest) hath subdued
 My towering nature thus!—Yet is he welcome!
 That youth—'twas in his pride he rescued me!
 I was his deadliest foe, and thus he proved
 His fearless scorn. Ha! ha! but he shall fail
 To melt me into womanish feebleness.
There I still baffle him—the grave shall seal
 My lips for ever—mortal shall not hear
 Montalba say—"forgive!"

[*He dies.*

(*The scene closes.*)

SCENE VI.—*Another part of the Field.*

PROCIDA. GUIDO. And other SICILIANS.

Pro. The day is ours; but he, the brave unknown,
 Who turn'd the tide of battle; he whose path
 Was victory—who hath seen him?

ALBERTI is brought in wounded and fettered.

Alb. Procida!

Pro. Be silent, traitor!—Bear him from my sight
 Unto your deepest dungeons.

Alb. In the grave
 A nearer home awaits me.—Yet one word
 Ere my voice fail—thy son—

Pro. Speak, speak!

Alb. Thy son
 Knows not a thought of guilt. That trait'rous plot
 Was mine alone. [*He is led away.*

Pro. Attest it, earth and Heaven!
 My son is guiltless!—Hear it, Sicily!
 The blood of Procida is noble still!—
 My son!—He lives, he lives!—His voice shall speak
 Forgiveness to his sire!—His name shall cast
 Its brightness o'er my soul!

Guido. Oh, day of joy!
 The brother of my heart is worthy still
 The lofty name he bears.

ANSELMO enters.

Pro. Anselmo, welcome !
In a glad hour we meet, for know, my son
Is guiltless.

Ans. And victorious ! by his arm
All hath been rescued.

Pro. How ! th' unknown—

Ans. Was he !

Thy noble Raimond ! By Vittoria's hand
Freed from his bondage in that awful hour
When all was flight and terror.

Pro. Now my cup
Of joy too brightly mantles !—Let me press
My warrior to a father's heart—and die ;
For life hath nought beyond !—Why comes he not ?
Anselmo, lead me to my valiant boy !

Ans. Temper this proud delight.

Pro. What means that look ?
He hath not fallen ?

Ans. He lives.

Pro. Away, away !
Bid the wide city with triumphal pomp
Prepare to greet her victor. Let this hour
Atone for all his wrongs !—

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE VII.—*Garden of a Convent.*

RAIMOND is led in wounded, leaning on ATTENDANTS.

Rai. Bear me to no dull couch, but let me die
In the bright face of nature !—Lift my helm,
That I may look on heaven.

First Attendant (to Second Attendant). Lay him to rest
On this green sunny bank, and I will call
Some holy sister to his aid ; but thou
Return unto the field, for high-born men
There need the peasant's aid. [Exit SECOND ATTENDANT.

(To RAIMOND.) Here gentler hands
Shall tend thee, warrior ; for in these retreats
They dwell, whose vows devote them to the care
Of all that suffer. May'st thou live to bless them !

[Exit FIRST ATTENDANT.

Rai. Thus have I wish'd to die!—'Twas a proud strife!
 My father bless'd th' unknown who rescued him,
 (Bless'd him, alas! *because* unknown!) and Guido,
 Beside me bravely struggling, call'd aloud,
 "Noble Sicilian, on!" Oh! had they deem'd
 'Twas I who led that rescue, they had spurn'd
 Mine aid, though 'twas deliverance; and their looks
 Had fallen, like blights, upon me.—There is one,
 Whose eye ne'er turn'd on mine, but its blue light
 Grew softer, trembling through the dewy mist
 Raised by deep tenderness!—Oh might the soul
 Set in that eye shine on me ere I perish!
 Is't not her voice?

CONSTANCE *enters, speaking to a NUN, who turns into another path.*

Con. Oh! happy they, kind sister,
 Whom thus ye tend; for it is theirs to fall
 With brave men side by side, when the roused heart
 Beats proudly to the last!—There are high souls
 Whose hope was such a death, and 'tis denied!

She approaches RAIMOND.

Young warrior, is there aught—*thou* here, my Raimond!
Thou here—and thus!—Oh! is this joy or woe?

Rai. Joy, be it joy, my own, my blessed love,
 E'en on the grave's dim verge!—yes it *is* joy!
 My Constance! victors have been crown'd, ere now,
 With the green shining laurel, when their brows
 Wore death's own impress—and it may be thus
 E'en yet, with me!—They freed me, when the foe
 Had half prevail'd, and I have proudly earn'd,
 With my heart's dearest blood, the meed to die
 Within thine arms.

Con. Oh! speak not thus—to die!
 These wounds may yet be closed.

[She attempts to bind his wounds.

Look on me, love!
 Why, there is *more* than life in thy glad mien,
 'Tis full of hope! and from thy kindled eye
 Breaks e'en unwonted light, whose ardent ray
 Seems born to be immortal!

Rai. 'Tis e'en so!
 The parting soul doth gather all her fires
 Around her; all her glorious hopes, and dreams,

And burning aspirations, to illumine
The shadowy dimness of th' untrodden path
Which lies before her ; and, encircled thus,
Awhile she sits in dying eyes, and thence
Sends forth her bright farewell. Thy gentle cares
Are vain, and yet I bless them.

Con. Say, not vain ;

The dying look not thus. We shall not part !

Rai. I have seen death ere now, and known him wear
Full many a changeful aspect.

Con. Oh ! but none

Radiant as thine, my warrior !—Thou wilt live !
Look round thee !—all is sunshine—is not this
A smiling world ?

Rai. Ay, gentlest love, a world
Of joyous beauty and magnificence,
Almost too fair to leave !—Yet must we tame
Our ardent hearts to this !—Oh, weep thou not !
There is no home for liberty, or love,
Beneath these festal skies !—Be not deceived ;
My way lies far beyond !—I shall be soon
That viewless thing which, with its mortal weeds
Casting off meaner passions, yet, we trust,
Forgets not how to love !

Con. And must this be ?

Heaven, thou art merciful !—Oh ! bid our souls
Depart together !

Rai. Constance ! there is strength
Within thy gentle heart, which hath been proved
Nobly, for me : Arouse it once again !
Thy grief unmans me—and I fain would meet
That which approaches, as a brave man yields
With proud submission to a mightier foe.—
It is upon me now !

Con. I will be calm.

Let thy head rest upon my bosom, Raimond,
And I will so suppress its quick deep sobs,
They shall but rock thee to thy rest. There is
A world (ay, let us seek it !) where no blight
Falls on the beautiful rose of youth, and there
I shall be with thee soon !

*PROCIDA and ANSELMO enter. PROCIDA on seeing RAIMOND
starts back.*

Ans. Lift up thy head,
Brave youth, exultingly ! for lo ! thine hour

Of glory comes !—Oh ! doth it come too late ?
 E'en now the false Alberti hath confess'd
 That guilty plot, for which thy life was doom'd
 To be th' atonement.

Rai. 'Tis enough ! Rejoice,
 Rejoice, my Constance ! for I leave a name
 O'er which thou may'st weep proudly ! *[He sinks back.*
 To thy breast

Fold me yet closer, for an icy dart
 Hath touch'd my veins.

Con. And must thou leave me, Raimond ?
 Alas ! thine eye grows dim—its wandering glance
 Is full of dreams.

Rai. Haste, haste, and tell my father
 I was no traitor !

Pro. *[rushing forward].* To that father's heart
 Return, forgiving all thy wrongs, return !
 Speak to me, Raimond !—Thou wert ever kind,
 And brave, and gentle ! Say that all the past
 Shall be forgiven ! That word from none but thee
 My lips e'er asked.—Speak to me once, my boy,
 My pride, my hope !—And is it with thee thus ?
 Look on me yet !—Oh ! must this woe be borne ?

Rai. Off with this weight of chains ! it is not meet
 For a crown'd conqueror !—Hark, the trumpet's voice !

*[A sound of triumphant music is heard, gradually
 approaching.]*

Is 't not a thrilling call ?—What drowsy spell
 Benumbs me thus ?—Hence ! I am free again !
 Now swell your festal strains, the field is won !
 Sing me to glorious dreams.

[He dies.]

Ans. The strife is past.
 There fled a noble spirit !

Con. Hush ! he sleeps —
 Disturb him not !

Ans. Alas ! this is no sleep
 From which the eye doth radiantly unclose :
 Bow down thy soul, for earthly hope is o'er !

*(The music continues approaching. GUIDO enters, with CITIZENS
 and SOLDIERS.)*

Guido. The shrines are deck'd, the festive torches blaze—
 Where is our brave deliverer ?—We are come
 To crown Palermo's victor !

Ans. Ye come 'ard.
The voice of human praise doth send no echo
Into the world of spirits.

[*The music ceases.*]

Pro. (after a pause). Is this dust
I look on—Raimond!—'tis but sleep—a smile
On his pale cheek sits proudly. Raimond, wake!
Oh, God! and this was his triumphant day!
My son, my injured son!

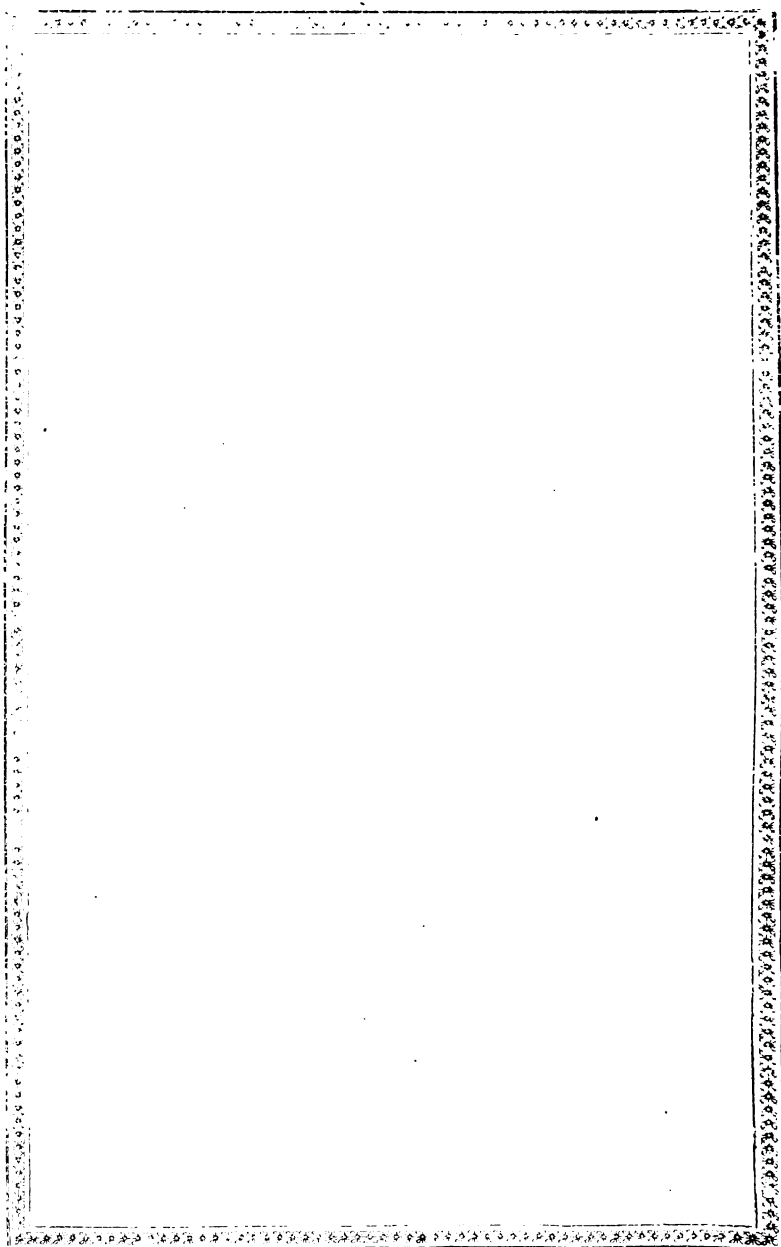
Con. (starting). Art thou his father?
I know thee now.—Hence, with thy dark stern eye,
And thy cold heart!—Thou canst not wake him now!
Away! he will not answer but to me,
For none like me hath loved him! He is mine!
Ye shall not rend him from me.

Pro. Oh! he *knew*
Thy love, poor maid! Shrink from me now no more!
He knew *thy* heart—but who shall tell him now
The depth, th' intenseness, and the agony,
Of my suppress'd affection?—I have learn'd
All his high worth in time—to deck his grave!
Is there not power in the strong spirit's woe
To force an answer from the viewless world
Of the departed?—Raimond!—speak! forgive!
Raimond! my victor, my deliverer, hear!
Why, what a world is this!—Truth ever bursts
On the dark soul too late: And glory crowns
Th' unconscious dead! And an hour comes to break
The mightiest hearts!—My son! my son! is this
A day of triumph?—Ay, for thee alone!

He throws himself upon the body of RAIMOND.

[*Curtain falls*]





THE FOREST SANCTUARY.

Ihr Plätze aller meiner stillen freuden,
Euch lass' ich hinter mir auf immerdar!
So ist des Geistes ruf an mich ergangen,
Mich treibt nicht eitles, irdisches verlangen.

Die Jungfrau von Orleans.

Long time against oppression have I fought,
And for the native liberty of faith
Have bled and suffer'd bonds.

Remorse, a Tragedy

THE following Poem is intended to describe the mental conflicts, as well as outward sufferings, of a Spaniard, who, flying from the religious persecutions of his own country, in the sixteenth century, takes refuge, with his child, in a North American forest. The story is supposed to be related by himself, amidst the wilderness which has afforded him an asylum.



THE FOREST SANCTUARY.



L.

THE voices of my home !—I hear them still !
They have been with me through the dreamy night—
The blessed household voices, wont to fill
My heart's clear depths with unalloy'd delight !
I hear them still, unchang'd :—though some from earth
Are music parted, and the tones of mirth—
Wild, silvery tones, that rang through days more bright !
Have died in others,—yet to me they come,
Singing of boyhood back—the voices of my home !

II.

They call me through this hush of woods, reposing
In the grey stillness of the summer morn ;
They wander by when heavy flowers are closing,
And thoughts grow deep, and winds and stars are born ;
Ev'n as a fount's remember'd gushings burst
On the parch'd traveller in his hour of thirst,
E'en thus they haunt me with sweet sounds, till worn
By quenchless longings, to my soul I say—
Oh! for the dove's swift wings, that I might flee away,—

III.

And find mine ark !—yet whither ?—I must bear
 A yearning heart within me to the grave.
 I am of those o'er whom a breath of air—
 Just darkening in its course the lake's bright wave,
 And sighing through the feathery canes'—hath power
 To call up shadows, in the silent hour,
 From the dim past, as from a wizard's cave !—
 So must it be !—These skies above me spread,
 Are they my own soft skies ?—Ye rest not here, my dead !

IV.

Ye far amidst the southern flowers lie sleeping,
 Your graves all smiling in the sunshine clear,
 Save one !—a blue, lone, distant main is sweeping
 High o'er *one* gentle head—ye rest not here !—
 'Tis not the olive, with a whisper swaying,
 Not thy low ripples, glassy water, playing
 Through my own chestnut groves, which fill mine ear ;
 But the faint echoes in my breast that dwell,
 And for their birth-place moan, as moans the ocean-shell.*

V.

Peace !—I will dash these fond regrets to earth,
 Ev'n as an eagle shakes the cumbering rain
 From his strong pinion. Thou that gav'st me birth,
 And lineage, and once home,—my native Spain !
 My own bright land—my father's land—my child's !
 What hath thy son brought from thee to the wilds ?—
 He hath brought marks of torture and the chain,
 Traces of things which pass not as a breeze ;
 A blighted name, dark thoughts, wrath, woe,—thy gifts are these.

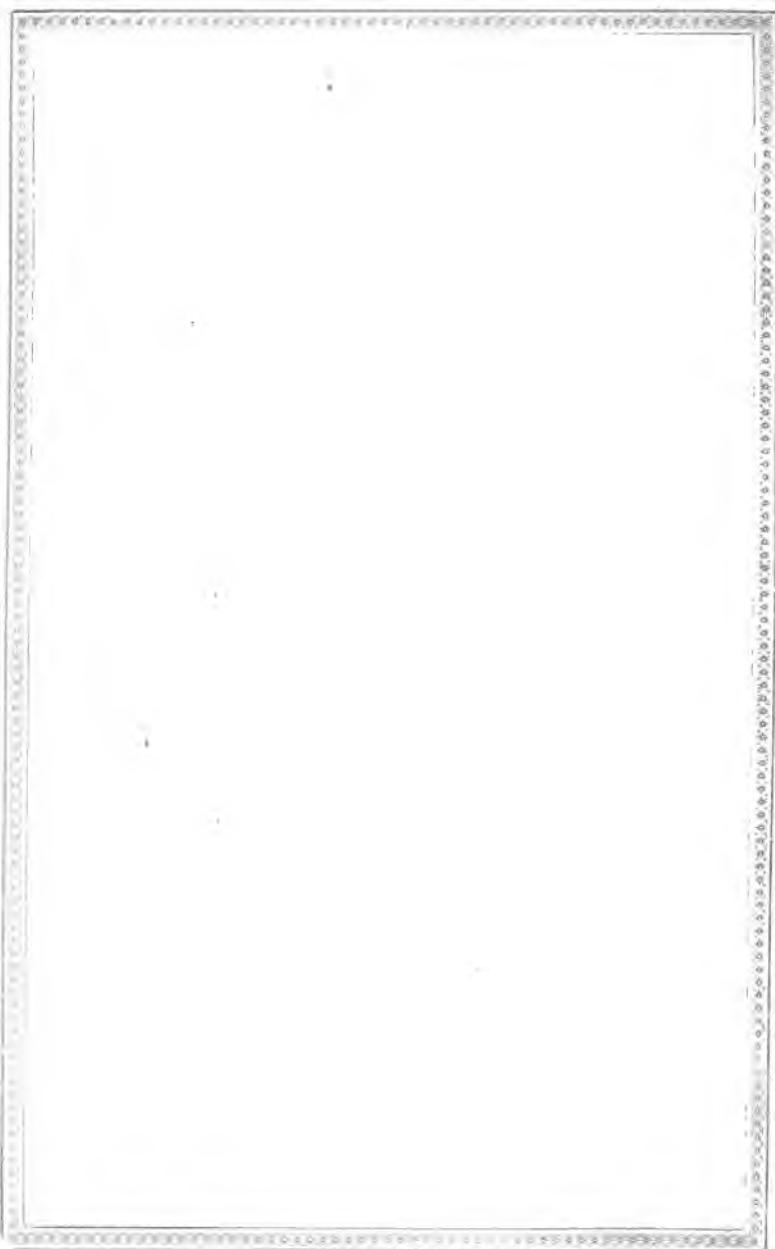
VI.

A blighted name !—I hear the winds of morn—
 Their sounds are not of this !—I hear the shiver
 Of the green reeds, and all the rustlings, borne
 From the high forest, when the light leaves quiver :
 Their sounds are not of this !—the cedars, waving,
 Lend it no tone : His wide savannahs laving,
 It is not murmur'd by the joyous river !
 What part hath mortal name, where God alone
 Speaks to the mighty waste, and through its heart is known



" . . . I must bear
A yearning heart within me to the grave,"

[P. 334.]



VII.

Is it not much that I may worship Him,
With nought my spirit's breathings to control,
And feel His presence in the vast, and dim,
And whispery woods, where dying thunders roll
From the far cataracts?—Shall I not rejoice
That I have learn'd at last to know *His* voice
From man's?—I will rejoice!—my soaring soul
Now hath redeem'd her birthright of the day.
And won, through clouds, to Him, her own unfetter'd way!

VIII.

And thou, my boy! that silent at my knee
Dost lift to mine thy soft, dark, earnest eyes,
Fill'd with the love of childhood, which I see
Pure through its depths, a thing without disguise;
Thou that hast breathed in slumber on my breast,
When I have check'd its throbs to give thee rest,
Mine own! whose young thoughts fresh before me rise!
Is it not much that I may guide thy prayer,
And circle thy glad soul with free and healthful air?

IX.

Why should I weep on thy bright head, my boy?
Within thy fathers' halls thou wilt not dwell,
Nor lift their banner, with a warrior's joy,
Amidst the sons of mountain chiefs, who fell
For Spain of old.—Yet what if rolling waves
Have borne us far from our ancestral graves?
Thou shalt not feel thy bursting heart rebel
As mine hath done; nor bear what I have borne,
Casting in falsehood's mould th' indignant brow of scorn.

X.

This shall not be thy lot, my blessed child!
I have not sorrow'd, struggled, lived in vain—
Hear me! magnificent and ancient wild;
And mighty rivers, ye that meet the main,
As deep meets deep; and forests, whose dim shade
The flood's voice, and the wind's, by swells pervade;
Hear me!—'tis well to die, and not complain,
Yet there are hours when the charged heart must speak,
Ev'n in the desert's ear to pour itself, or break!

XI.

I see an oak before me,³ it hath been
The crown'd one of the woods ; and might have flung
Its hundred arms to heaven, still freshly green,
But a wild vine around the stem hath clung,
From branch to branch close wreaths of bondage throwing
Till the proud tree, before no tempest bowing,
Hath shrunk and died, those serpent-folds among.
Alas !—alas !—what is it that I see ?
An image of man's mind, land of my sires, with thee !

XII.

Yet art thou lovely !—Song is on thy hills —
O sweet and mournful melodies of Spain,
That lull'd my boyhood, how your memory thrills
The exile's heart with sudden-wakening pain !—
Your sounds are on the rocks :—That I might hear
Once more the music of the mountaineer !—
And from the sunny vales the shepherd's strain
Floats out, and fills the solitary place
With the old tuneful names of Spain's heroic race.

XIII.

But there was silence one bright, golden day,
Through my own pine-hung mountains. Clear, yet lone,
In the rich autumn light the vineyards lay,
And from the fields the peasant's voice was gone ;
And the red grapes untrodden strew'd the ground,
And the free flocks untended roam'd around :
Where was the pastor ?—where the pipe's wild tone ?
Music and mirth were hush'd the hills among,
While to the city's gates each hamlet pour'd its throng.

XIV.

Silence upon the mountains !—But within
The city's gates a rush—a press—a swell
Of multitudes their torrent way to win ;
And heavy boomings of a dull, deep bell,
A dead pause following each—like that which parts
The dash of billows, holding breathless hearts
Fast in the hush of fear—knell after knell ;
And sounds of thickening steps, like thunder-rain,
That plashes on the roof of some vast echoing fane !

XV.

What pageant's hour approach'd ?—The sullen gate
Of a strong ancient prison-house was thrown
Back to the day. And who, in mournful state,
Came forth, led slowly o'er its threshold-stone ?
They that had learn'd, in cells of secret gloom,
How sunshine is forgotten !—They, to whom
The very features of mankind were grown
Things that bewilder'd !—O'er their dazzled sight,
They lifted their wan hands, and cower'd before the light !

XVI.

To this man brings his brother !—Some were there,
Who with their desolation had entwined
Fierce strength, and girt the sternness of despair
Fast round their bosoms, ev'n as warriors bind
The breastplate on for fight : but brow and cheek
Seem'd *theirs* a torturing panoply to speak !
And there were some, from whom the very mind
Had been wrung out : they smiled—oh ! startling smile
Whence man's high soul is fled !—Where doth it sleep the while ?

XVII.

But onward moved the melancholy train,
For their false creeds in fiery pangs to die.
This was the solemn sacrifice of Spain—
Heaven's offering from the land of chivalry !
Through thousands, thousands of their race they moved—
Oh ! how unlike all others !—the beloved
The free, the proud, the beautiful ! whose eye
Grew fix'd before them, while a people's breath
Was hush'd, and its one soul bound in the thought of death !

XVIII.

It might be that amidst the countless throng,
There swell'd some heart, with Pity's weight oppress'd,
For the wide stream of human love is strong ;
And woman, on whose fond and faithful breast
Childhood is rear'd, and at whose knee the sigh
Of its first prayer is breathed, she, too, was nigh.—
But life is dear, and the free footstep bless'd,
And home a sunny place, where each may fill
Some eye with glistening smiles,—and therefore all were still—

XIX.

All still—youth, courage, strength!—a winter laid,
A chain of palsy, cast on might and mind!
Still, as at noon a Southern forest's shade,
They stood, those breathless masses of mankind;
Still, as a frozen torrent!—but the wave
Soon leaps to foaming freedom—they, the brave,
Endured—they saw the martyr's place assign'd
In the red flames—whence is the withering spell
That numbs each human pulse?—they saw, and thought it well.

XX.

And I, too, thought it well! That very morn
From a far land I came, yet round me clung
The spirit of my own. No hand had torn
With a strong grasp away the veil which hung
Between mine eyes and truth. I gazed, I saw,
Dimly, as through a glass. In silent awe
I watch'd the fearful rites; and if there sprung
One rebel feeling from its deep founts up,
Shuddering, I flung it back, as guilt's own poison-cup.

XXI.

But I was waken'd as the dreamers waken
Whom the shrill trumpet and the shriek of dread
Rouse up at midnight, when their walls are taken,
And they must battle till their blood is shed
On their own threshold-floor. A path for light
Through my torn breast was shatter'd by the might
Of the swift thunder-stroke—and Freedom's tread
Came in through ruins, late, yet not in vain,
Making the blighted place all green with life again.

XXII.

Still darkly, slowly, as a sullen mass
Of cloud, o'ersweeping, without wind, the sky,
Dream-like I saw the sad procession pass,
And mark'd its victims with a tearless eye.
They moved before me but as pictures, wrought
Each to reveal some secret of man's thought,
On the sharp edge of sad mortality,
Till in his place came one—oh! could it be?
My friend, my heart's first friend!—and did I gaze on thee?

XXIII.

On thee ! with whom in boyhood I had play'd,
At the grape-gatherings, by my native streams ;
And to whose eye my youthful soul had laid
Bare, as to Heaven's, its glowing world of dreams ;
And by whose side midst warriors I had stood,
And in whose helm was brought—oh ! earn'd with blood !
The fresh wave to my lips, when tropic beams
Smote on my fever'd brow !—Ay, years had pass'd,
Severing our paths, brave friend !—and *thus* we met at last !

XXIV.

I see it still—the lofty mien thou borest—
On thy pale forehead sat a sense of power !
The very look that once thou brightly worst,
Cheering me onward through a fearful hour,
When we were girt by Indian bow and spear,
Midst the white Andes—ev'n as mountain deer,
Hemm'd in our camp—but through the javelin-shower
We rent our way, a tempest of despair !—
And thou—hadst thou but died with thy true brethren there !

XXV.

I call the fond wis'a back—for thou hast perish'd
More nobly far, my Alvar !—making known
The might of truth ;⁴ and be thy memory cherish'd
With theirs, the thousands, that around her throne
Have pour'd their lives out smiling, in that doom
Finding a triumph, if denied a tomb !—
Ay, with their ashes hath the wind been sown,
And with the wind their spirit shall be spread,
Filling man's heart and home with records of the dead.

XXVI.

Thou Searcher of the Soul ! in whose dread sight
Not the bold guilt alone, that mocks the skies,
But the scarce-own'd, unwhisper'd thought of night,
As a thing written with the sunbeam lies ;
Thou know'st—whose eye through shade and depth can see,
That this man's crime was but to worship thee,
Like those that made their hearts thy sacrifice,
The call'd of yore ; wont by the Saviour's side,
On the dim Olive-Mount to pray at eventide.

XXVII.

For the strong spirit will at times awake,
Piercing the mists that wrap her clay-abode ;
And, born of thee, she may not always take
Earth's accents for the oracles of God ;
And ev'n for this—O dust, whose mask is power !
Reed, that wouldst be a scourge thy little hour !
Spark, whereon yet the mighty hath not trod,
And therefore thou destroyest !—where were flown
Our hope, if man were left to man's decree alone ?

XXVIII.

But this I felt not yet. I could but gaze
On him, my friend ; while that swift moment threw
A sudden freshness back on vanish'd days,
Like water-drops on some dim picture's hue ;
Calling the proud time up, when first I stood
Where banners floated, and my heart's quick blood
Sprang to a torrent as the clarion blew,
And he—his sword was like a brother's worn,
That watches through the field his mother's youngest born.

XXIX.

But a lance met me in that day's career,—
Senseless I lay amidst th' o'ersweeping fight,
Wakening at last—how full, how strangely clear,
That scene on memory flash'd !—the shivery light,
Moonlight, on broken shields—the plain of slaughter,
The fountain-side—the low sweet sound of water—
And Alvar bending o'er me—from the night
Covering me with his mantle !—all the past
Flow'd back—my soul's far chords all answer'd to the blast.

XXX.

Till, in that rush of visions, I became
As one that by the bands of slumber wound,
Lies with a powerless, but all-thrilling frame,
Intense in consciousness of sight and sound,
Yet buried in a wildering dream which brings
Loved faces round him, girt with fearful things !
Troubled ev'n thus I stood, but chain'd and bound
On that familiar form mine eye to keep :—
Alas ! I might not fall upon his neck and weep !

XXXI.

He pass'd me—and what next?—I look'd on two,
Following his footsteps to the same dread place,
For the same guilt—his sisters!⁵—Well I knew
The beauty on those brows, though each young face
Was changed—so deeply changed!—a dungeon's air
Is hard for loved and lovely things to bear;
And ye, O daughters of a lofty race,
Queen-like Theresa! radiant Inez!—flowers
So cherish'd! were ye then but rear'd for those dark hours?

XXXII.

A mournful home, young sisters! had ye left,
With your lutes hanging hush'd upon the wall,
And silence round the aged man, bereft
Of each glad voice, once answering to his call.
Alas, that lonely father! doom'd to pine
For sounds departed in his life's decline,
And, midst the shadowing banners of his hall,
With his white hair to sit, and deem the name
A hundred chiefs had borne, cast down by you to shame!⁶

XXXIII.

And woe for you, midst looks and words of love,
And gentle hearts and faces, nursed so long!
How had I seen you in your beauty move,
Wearing the wreath, and listening to the song!—
Yet sat, ev'n then, what seem'd the crowd to shun,
Half veil'd upon the clear pale brow of one,
And deeper thoughts than oft to youth belong,
Thoughts, such as wake to evening's whispery sway,
Within the drooping shade of her sweet eyelids lay.

XXXIV.

And if she mingled with the festive train,
It was but as some melancholy star
Beholds the dance of shepherds on the plain,
In its bright stillness present, though afar.
Yet would she smile—and that, too, hath its smile—
Circled with joy which reach'd her not the while,
And bearing a lone spirit, not at war
With earthly things, but o'er their form and hue
Shedding too clear a light, too sorrowfully true.

XXXV.

But the dark hours wring forth the hidden might
Which hath lain bedded in the silent soul,
A treasure all undreamt of ;—as the night
Calls out the harmonies of streams that roll
Unheard by day. It seem'd as if her breast
Had hoarded energies, till then suppress'd
Almost with pain, and bursting from control,
And finding first that hour their pathway free :—
Could a rose brave the storm, such might her emblem be !

XXXVI.

For the soft gloom whose shadow still had hung
On her fair brow, beneath its garlands worn,
Was fled ; and fire, like prophecy's, had sprung
Clear to her kindled eye. It might be scorn—
Pride—sense of wrong—ay, the frail heart is bound
By these at times, ev'n as with adamant round,
Kept so from breaking !—yet *not thus* upborne
She moved, though some sustaining passion's wave
Lifted her fervent soul—a sister for the brave !

XXXVII.

And yet, alas ! to see the strength which clings
Round woman in such hours !—a mournful sight.
Though lovely !—an o'erflowing of the springs,
The full springs of affection, deep as bright !
And she, because her life is ever twined
With other lives, and by no stormy wind
May thence be shaken, and because the light
Of tenderness is round her, and her eye
Doth weep such passionate tears—therefore she thus can die.

XXXVIII.

Therefore didst *thou*, through that heart-shaking scene,
As through a triumph move ; and cast aside
Thine own sweet thoughtfulness for victory's mien,
O faithful sister ! cheering thus the guide,
And friend, and brother of thy sainted youth,
Whose hand had led thee to the source of truth,
Where thy glad soul from earth was purified ;
Nor wouldst thou, following him through all the past,
That he should see thy step grow tremulous at last.

XXXIX.

For thou hadst made no deeper love a guest
Midst thy young spirit's dreams, than that which grows
Between the nurtured of the same fond breast,
The shelter'd of one roof; and thus it rose
Twined in with life.—How is it, that the hours
Of the same sport, the gathering early flowers
Round the same tree, the sharing one repose,
And mingling one first prayer in murmurs soft,
From the heart's memory fade, in this world's breath, so oft?

XL.

But thee that breath had touch'd not; thee, nor him,
The true in all things found!—and thou wert blest
Ev'n then, that no remember'd change could dim
The perfect image of affection, press'd
Like armour to thy bosom!—thou hadst kept
Watch by that brother's couch of pain, and wept,
Thy sweet face covering with thy robe, when rest
Fled from the sufferer; thou hadst bound his faith
Unto thy soul;—one light, one hope ye chose—one death.

XLI.

So didst thou pass on brightly!—but for her,
Next in that path, how may *her* doom be spoken!—
All-merciful! to think that such things were,
And *are*, and seen by men with hearts unbroken!
To think of that fair girl, whose path had been
So strew'd with rose-leaves, all one fairy scene!
And whose quick glance came ever as a token
Of hope to drooping thought, and her glad voice
As a free bird's in spring, that makes the woods rejoice

XLII.

And she to die!—she loved the laughing earth
With such deep joy in its fresh leaves and flowers!—
Was not her smile even as the sudden birth
Of a young rainbow, colouring vernal showers?
Yes! but to meet her fawn-like step, to hear
The gushes of wild song, so silvery clear,
Which, oft unconsciously, in happier hours
Flow'd from her lips, was to forget the sway
Of Time and death below,—blight, shadow, dull decay

XLIII.

Could this change be?—the hour, the scene, where last
I saw that form, came floating o'er my mind :—
A golden vintage eve ;—the heats were pass'd,
And, in the freshness of the fanning wind,
Her father sat, where gleam'd the first faint star
Through the lime-boughs ; and with her light guitar,
She, on the greensward at his feet reclined,
In his calm face laugh'd up ; some shepherd-lay
Singing, as childhood sings on the lone hills at play.

XLIV.

And now—oh, God !—the bitter fear of death,
The sore amaze, the faint o'ershadowing dread,
Had grasp'd her !—panting in her quick-drawn breath,
And in her white lips quivering ;—onward led,
She look'd up with her dim bewildered eyes,
And there smiled out her own soft brilliant skies,
Far in their sultry, southern azure spread,
Glowing with joy, but silent !—still they smiled,
Yet sent down no reprieve for earth's poor trembling child.

XLV.

Alas ! that earth had all too strong a hold,
Too fast, sweet Inez ! on thy heart, whose bloom
Was given to early love, nor knew how cold
The hours which follow. There was one, with whom,
Young as thou wert, and gentle, and untried,
Thou might'st, perchance, unshrinkingly have died ;
But he was far away ;—and with thy doom
Thus gathering, life grew so intensely dear,
That all the slight frame shook with its cold mortal fear !

XLVI.

No aid !—thou too didst pass !—and all had pass'd,
The fearful—and the desperate—and the strong !
Some like the bark that rushes with the blast,
Some like the leaf swept shivering along,
And some as men that have but one more field
To fight, and then may slumber on their shield,—
Therefore they arm in hope. But now the throng
Roll'd on, and bore me with their living tide,
Ev'n as a bark wherein is left no power to guide.

XLVII.

Wave swept on wave. We reach'd a stately square,
Deck'd for the rites. An altar stood on high,
And gorgeous, in the midst : a place for prayer,
And praise, and offering. Could the earth supply
No fruits, no flowers for sacrifice, of all
Which on her sunny lap unheeded fall?
No fair young firstling of the flock to die,
As when before their God the Patriarchs stood?—
Look down ! man brings thee, Heaven ! his brother's guiltless
blood !

XLVIII.

Hear its voice, hear !—a cry goes up to thee
From the stain'd sod ; make thou thy judgment known
On him, the shedder !—let his portion be
The fear that walks at midnight—give the moan
In the wind haunting him a power to say
“ Where is thy brother ? ”—and the stars a ray
To search and shake his spirit, when alone,
With the dread splendour of their burning eyes !—
So shall earth own Thy will—mercy, not sacrifice !

XLIX.

Sounds of triumphant praise !—the mass was sung—
Voices that die not might have pour'd such strains !
Through Salem's towers might that proud chant have rung
When the Most High, on Syria's palmy plains,
Had quell'd her foes !—so full it swept, a sea
Of loud waves jubilant, and rolling free !—
Oft when the wind, as through resounding fanes,
Hath fill'd the choral forests with its power,
Some deep tone brings me back the music of that hour.

L.

It died away ;—the incense-cloud was driven
Before the breeze—the words of doom were said ;
And the sun faded mournfully from Heaven :—
He faded mournfully ! and dimly red,
Parting in clouds from those that look'd their last,
And sigh'd—“ Farewell, thou Sun ! ”—Eve glow'd and pass
Night—midnight and the moon—came forth and shed
Sleep, even as dew, on glen, wood, peopled spot—
Save one—a place of death—and there men slumber'd not.

LI.

'Twas not within the city?—but in sight
Of the snow-crown'd sierras, freely sweeping,
With many an eagle's eyrie on the height,
And hunter's cabin, by the torrent peeping
Far off: and vales between, and vineyards lay,
With sound and gleam of waters on their way,
And chestnut woods, that girt the happy sleeping
In many a peasant-home!—the midnight sky
Brought softly that rich world round those who came to die

LII.

The darkly-glorious midnight sky of Spain,
Burning with stars!—What had the torches' glare
To do beneath that Temple, and profane
Its holy radiance?—By their wavering flare,
I saw beside the pyres—I see thee *now*,
O bright Theresa! with thy lifted brow,
And thy clasp'd hands, and dark eyes fill'd with prayer!
And thee, sad Inez! bowing thy fair head,
And mantling up thy face, all colourless with dread!

LIII.

And Alvar! Alvar!—I beheld thee too,
Pale, steadfast, kingly, till thy clear glance fell
On that young sister; then perturb'd it grew,
And all thy labouring bosom seem'd to swell
With painful tenderness. Why came I there,
That troubled image of my friend to bear
Thence, for my after-years?—a thing to dwell
In my heart's core, and on the darkness rise,
Disquieting my dreams with its bright mournful eyes?

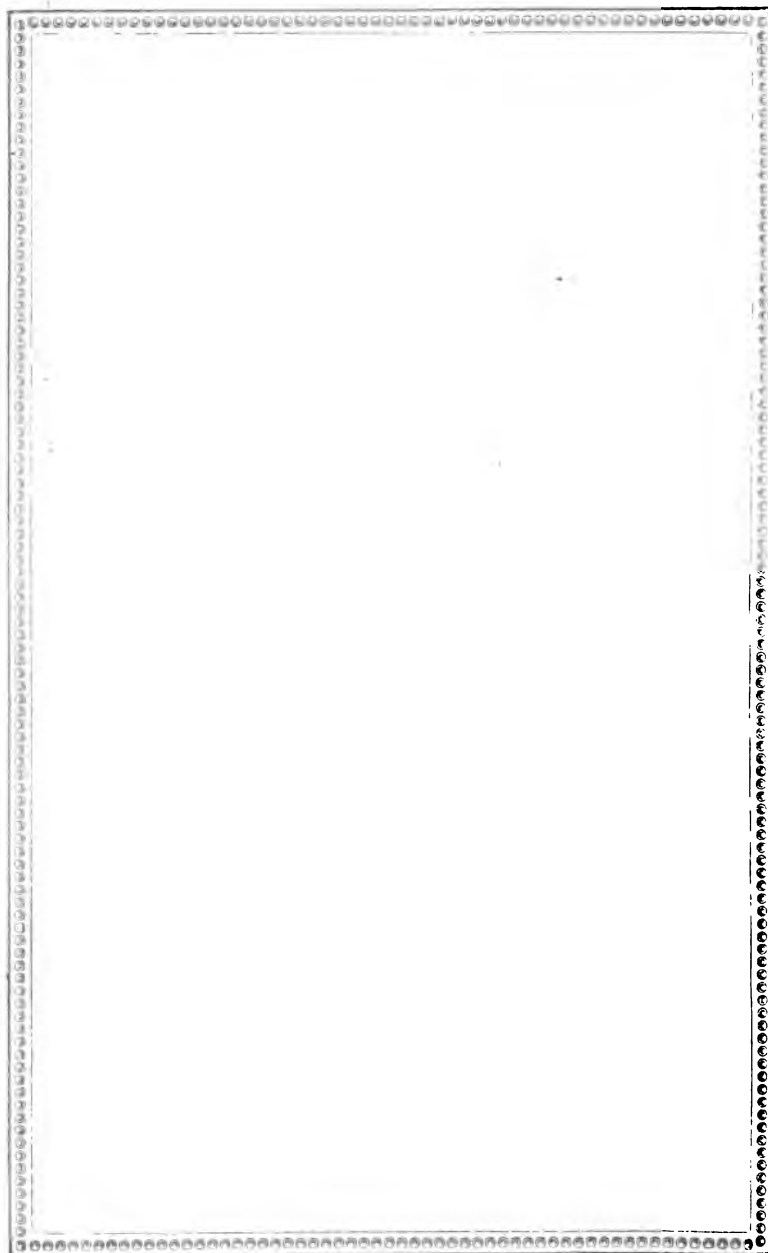
LIV.

Why came I?—oh! the heart's deep mystery!—Why
In man's last hour doth vain affection's gaze
Fix itself down on struggling agony,
To the dimm'd eye-balls freezing as they glaze?
It might be—yet the power to will seem'd o'er—
That my soul yearn'd to hear his voice once more!
But mine was fetter'd!—mute in strong amaze,
I watch'd his features as the night-wind blew,
And torch-light or the moon's pass'd o'er their marble hue.



"He looked from his bark o'er the gloomy deep."

[p. 399]



LV.

The trampling of a steed !—a tall white steed,
Rending his fiery way the crowds among—
A storm's way through a forest—came at speed,
And a wild voice cried "Inez !" Swift she flung
The mantle from her face, and gazed around,
With a faint shriek at that familiar sound ;
And from his seat a breathless rider sprung,
And dash'd off fiercely those who came to part,
And rush'd to that pale girl, and clasp'd her to his heart.

LVI.

And for a moment all around gave way
To that full burst of passion !—on his breast,
Like a bird panting yet from fear she lay,
But blest—in misery's very lap—yet blest !—
O love, love strong as death !—from such an hour
Pressing out joy by thine immortal power,
Holy and fervent love ! had earth but rest
For thee and thine, this world were all too fair !
How could we thence be wean'd to die without despair ?

LVII.

But she, as falls a willow from the storm,
O'er its own river streaming—thus reclined
On the youth's bosom hung her fragile form,
And clasping arms, so passionately twined
Around his neck—with such a trusting fold,
A full deep sense of safety in their hold,
As if nought earthly might th' embrace unbind !
Alas ! a child's fond faith, believing still
Its mother's breast beyond the lightning's reach to kill !

LVIII.

Brief rest ! upon the turning billow's height,
A strange, sweet moment of some heavenly strain,
Floating between the savage gusts of night,
That sweep the seas to foam ! Soon dark again
The hour—the scene—th' intensely present, rush'd
Back on her spirit, and her large tears gush'd
Like blood-drops from a victim ; with swift rain
Bathing the bosom where she lean'd that hour,
As if her life would melt into th' o'erswelling shower.

LIX.

But he, whose arm sustain'd her!—oh! I knew
 Twas vain,—and yet he hoped!—he fondly strove
 Back from her faith her sinking soul to woo,
 As life might yet be hers!—A dream of love
 Which could not look upon so fair a thing,
 Remembering how like hope, like joy, like spring,
 Her smile was wont to glance, her step to move,
 And deem that men indeed, in very truth,
Could mean the sting of death for her soft flowering youth!

LX.

He woo'd her back to life.—“Sweet Inez, live!
 My blessed Inez!—visions have beguiled
 Thy heart—abjure them!—thou wert form'd to give,
 And to find, joy; and hath not sunshine smiled
 Around thee ever? Leave me not, mine own!
 Or earth will grow too dark!—for thee alone,
 Thee have I loved, thou gentlest! from a child,
 And borne thine image with me o'er the sea,
 Thy soft voice in my soul—speak! Oh! yet live for me!”

LXI.

She look'd up wildly; these were anxious eyes
 Waiting that look—sad eyes of troubled thought,
 Alvar's—Theresa's!—Did her childhood rise,
 With all its pure and home-affections fraught,
 In the brief glance?—She clasp'd her hands—the strife
 Of love, faith, fear, and that vain dream of life,
 Within her woman's breast so deeply wrought,
 It seem'd as if a reed so slight and weak
Must, in the rending storm not quiver only—break!

LXII.

And thus it was—the young cheek flush'd and faded,
 As the swift blood in currents came and went,
 And hues of death the marble brow o'ershaded,
 And the sunk eye a watery lustre sent
 Through its white fluttering lids. Then tremblings pass'd
 O'er the frail form, that shook it, as the blast
 Shakes the sere leaf, until the spirit rent
 Its way to peace—the fearful way unknown—
 Pale in love's arms she lay—*she!*—what had loved was gone!

LXIII.

Joy for thee, trembler!—thou redeem'd one, joy!
Young dove set free!—earth, ashes, soulless clay,
Remain'd for baffled vengeance to destroy;—
Thy chain was riven!—nor hadst thou cast away
Thy hope in thy last hour!—though love was there
Striving to wring thy troubled soul from prayer,
And life seem'd robed in beautiful array,
Too fair to leave!—but this might be forgiven,
Thou wert so richly crown'd with precious gifts of Heaven!

LXIV.

But woe for him who felt the heart grow still,
Which, with its weight of agony, had lain
Breaking on his!—Scarce could the mortal chill
Of the hush'd bosom, ne'er to heave again,
And all the silence curdling round the eye,
Bring home the stern belief that she could die,
That she indeed could die!—for wild and vain
As hope might be—his soul *had* hoped—'twas o'er—
Slowly his failing arms dropp'd from the form they bore.

LXV.

They forced him from that spot.—It might be well,
That the fierce, reckless words by anguish wrung
From his torn breast, all aimless as they fell,
Like spray-drops from the strife of torrents flung,
Were mark'd as guilt.—There are, who note these things
Against the smitten heart; its breaking strings—
On whose low thrills once gentle music hung—
With a rude hand of touch unholy trying,
And numbering then as crimes, the deep, strange tones replying.

LXVI.

But ye in solemn joy, O faithful pair!
Stood gazing on your parted sister's dust;
I saw your features by the torch's glare,
And they were brightening with a heavenward trust!
I saw the doubt, the anguish, the dismay,
Melt from my Alvar's glorious mien away;
And peace was there—the calmness of the just!
And, bending down the slumberer's brow to kiss,
"Thy rest is won," he said; "sweet sister! praise for this!"

LXVII.

I started as from sleep ;—yes ! he had spoken—
 A breeze had troubled memory's hidden source !
 At once the torpor of my soul was broken—
 Thought, feeling, passion, woke in tenfold force.—
 There are soft breathings in the southern wind,
 That so your ice-chains, O ye streams ! unbind,
 And free the foaming swiftness of your course !—
 I burst from those that held me back, and fell
 Ev'n on his neck, and cried—" Friend ! brother ! fare thee well ! "

LXVIII.

Did *he* not say " Farewell " ?—Alas ! no breath
 Came to mine ear. Hoarse murmurs from the throng
 Told that the mysteries in the face of death
 Had from their eager sight been veil'd too long.
 And we were parted as the surge might part
 Those that would die together, true of heart.—
His hour was come—but in mine anguish strong,
 Like a fierce swimmer through the midnight sea,
 Blindly I rush'd away from that which was to be.

LXIX.

Away—away I rush'd ;—but swift and high
 The arrowy pillars of the firelight grew,
 Till the transparent darkness of the sky
 Flush'd to a blood-red mantle in their hue ;
 And, phantom-like, the kindling city seem'd
 To spread, float, wave, as on the wind they stream'd,
 With their wild splendour chasing me !—I knew
 The death-work was begun—I veil'd mine eyes,
 Yet stopp'd in spell-bound fear to catch the victims' cries.

LXX.

What heard I then ?—a ringing shriek of pain,
 Such as for ever haunts the tortured ear ?—
 I heard a sweet and solemn-breathing strain
 Piercing the flames, untremulous and clear !—
 The rich, triumphal tones !—I knew them well,
 As they came floating with a breezy swell !
 Man's voice was there—a clarion voice to cheer
 In the mid-battle—aye, to turn the flying—
 Woman's—that might have sung of Heaven beside the dying !

LXXI.

It was a fearful, yet a glorious thing,
To hear that hymn of martyrdom, and know
That its glad stream of melody could spring
Up from th' unsounded gulfs of human woe!
Alvar! Theresa!—what is deep? what strong?—
God's breath within the soul!—It fill'd that song
From your victorious voices!—but the glow
On the hot air and lurid skies increased—
Faint grew the sounds—more faint—I listen'd—they had ceased!

LXXII.

And thou indeed hadst perish'd, my soul's friend!
I might form other ties—but thou alone
Couldst with a glance the veil of dimness rend,
By other years o'er boyhood's memory thrown!
Others might aid me onward:—thou and I
Had mingled the fresh thoughts that early die,
Once flowering—never more!—And thou wert gone!
Who could give back my youth, my spirit free,
Or be in aught again what thou hadst been to me?

LXXIII.

And yet I wept thee not, thou true and brave!
I could not weep;—there gather'd round thy name
Too deep a passion!—*thou* denied a grave!
Thou, with the blight flung on thy soldier's fame!
Had I not known thy heart from childhood's time?
Thy heart of hearts?—and couldst thou die for crime?—
No! had all earth decreed that death of shame,
I would have set, against all earth's decree,
Th' inalienable trust of my firm soul in thee!

LXXIV.

There are swift hours in life—strong, rushing hours,
That do the work of tempests in their might!
They shake down things that stood as rocks and towers
Unto th' undoubting mind;—they pour in light
Where it but startles—like a burst of day
For which the uprooting of an oak makes way;—
They sweep the colouring mists from off our sight,
They touch with fire thought's graven page, the roll
Stamp'd with past years—and lo! it shrivels as a scroll!

LXXV.

And this was of such hours!—the sudden flow
Of my soul's tide seem'd whelming me; the glare
Of the red flames, yet rocking to and fro,
Scorch'd up my heart with breathless thirst for air,
And solitude and freedom. It had been
Well with me then, in some vast desert scene,
To pour my voice out, for the winds to bear
On with them, wildly questioning the sky,
Fiercely th' untroubled stars, of man's dim destiny.

LXXVI.

I would have call'd, adjuring the dark cloud;
To the most ancient Heavens I would have said—
"Speak to me! show me truth!"—through night aloud
I would have cried to him, the newly dead,
"Come back! and show me truth!"—My spirit seem'd
Gasping for some free burst, its darkness teem'd
With such pent storms of thought!—again I fled—
I fled, a refuge from man's face to gain,
Scarce conscious when I paused, entering a lonely fane.

LXXVII.

A mighty minster, dim, and proud, and vast!
Silence was round the sleepers whom its floor
Shut in the grave; a shadow of the past,
A memory of the sainted steps that wore
Erewhile its gorgeous pavement, seem'd to brood
Like mist upon the stately solitude,
A halo of sad fame to mantle o'er
Its white sepulchral forms of mail-clad men,
And all was hush'd as night in some deep Alpine glen.

LXXVIII.

More hush'd, far more!—for there the wind sweeps by,
Or the woods tremble to the streams' loud play!
Here a strange echo made my very sigh
Seem for the place too much a sound of day!
Too much my footstep broke the moonlight, fading,
Yet arch through arch in one soft flow pervading;
And I stood still:—prayer, chant, had died away,
Yet past me floated a funereal breath
Of incense.—I stood still—as before God and death!

LXXIX.

For thick ye girt me round, ye long-departed !⁹
 Dust—imaged form—with cross, and shield, and crest ;
 It seem'd as if your ashes would have started,
 Had a wild voice burst forth above your rest !
 Yet ne'er, perchance, did worshipper of yore
 Bear to your thrilling presence what I bore
 Of wrath—doubt—anguish—battling in the breast !
 I could have pour'd out words, on that pale air,
 To make your proud tombs ring :—no, no ! I could not *there* !

LXXX.

Not midst those aisles, through which a thousand years
 Mutely as clouds and reverently had swept ;
 Not by those shrines, which yet the trace of tears
 And kneeling votaries on their marble kept !
 Ye were too mighty in your pomp of gloom
 And trophied age, O temple, altar, tomb !
 And you, ye dead !—for in that faith ye slept,
 Whose weight had grown a mountain's on my heart,
 Which could not *there* be loosed.—I turn'd me to depart.

LXXXI.

I turn'd—what glimmer'd faintly on my sight,
 Faintly, yet brightening as a wreath of snow
 Seen through dissolving haze ?—The moon, the night,
 Had waned, and dawn pour'd in ;—grey, shadowy, slow,
 Yet dayspring still !—a solemn hue it caught,
 Piercing the storied windows, darkly fraught
 With stoles and draperies of imperial glow ;
 And soft, and sad, that colouring gleam was thrown,
 Where, pale, a pictured form above the altar shone.

LXXXII.

Thy form, Thou Son of God !—a wrathful deep,
 With foam, and cloud, and tempest round Thee spread,
 And such a weight of night !—a night, when sleep
 From the fierce rocking of the billows fled.
 A bark show'd dim beyond Thee, with its mast
 Bow'd, and its rent sail shivering to the blast ;
 But, like a spirit in Thy gliding tread,
 Thou, as o'er glass, didst walk that stormy sea
 through rushing winds, which left a silent path for Thee.

LXXXIII.

So still Thy white robes fell !—no breath of air
Within their long and slumb'rous folds had sway !
So still the waves of parted, shadowy hair
From Thy clear brow flow'd droopingly away !
Dark were the Heavens above Thee, Saviour !—dark
The gulfs, Deliverer ! round the straining bark !
But Thou !—o'er all Thine aspect and array
Was pour'd one stream of pale, broad, silvery light—
Thou wert the single star of that all-shrouding night !

LXXXIV.

Aid for one sinking !—Thy lone brightness gleam'd
On his wild face, just lifted o'er the wave,
With its worn, fearful, *human* look, that seem'd
To cry, through surge and blast—"I perish—save !"
Not to the winds—not vainly !—Thou wert nigh,
Thy hand was stretch'd to fainting agony,
Even in the portals of th' unquiet grave !
O Thou that art the life ! and yet didst bear
Too much of mortal woe to turn from mortal prayer !

LXXXV.

But was it not a thing to rise on death
With its remember'd light, that face of Thine,
Redeemer ! dimm'd by this world's misty breath,
Yet mournfully, mysteriously divine ?—
Oh ! that calm, sorrowful, prophetic eye,
With its dark depths of grief, love, majesty !
And the pale glory of the brow !—a shrine
Where Power sat veil'd, yet shedding softly round
What told that *Thou* couldst be but for a time uncrown'd !

LXXXVI.

And more than all, the Heaven of that sad smile !
The lip of mercy, our immortal trust !
Did not that look, that very look, erewhile,
Pour its o'ershadow'd beauty on the dust ?
Wert Thou not such when earth's dark cloud hung o'er
Thee ?—
Surely Thou wert !—my heart grew hush'd before Thee,
Sinking with all its passions, as the gust
Sank at Thy voice, along its billowy way :—
What had I there to do, but kneel, and weep, and pray ?

LXXXVII.

Amidst the stillness rose my spirit's cry,
Amidst the dead—"By that full cup of woe,
Press'd from the fruitage of mortality,
Saviour! for Thee—give light! that I may know
If by *Thy* will, in Thine all-healing name,
Men cast down human hearts to blighting shame,
And early death—and say, if this be so,
Where then is mercy?—whither shall we flee,
So unallied to hope, save by our hold on Thee?

LXXXVIII.

"But didst Thou not, the deep sea brightly treading,
Lift from despair that struggler with the wave?
And wert Thou not, sad tears, yet awful, shedding,
Beheld, a weeper at a mortal's grave?
And is this weight of anguish, which they bind
On life, this searing to the quick of mind,
That but to God its own free path would crave,
This crushing out of hope, and love, and youth,
Thy will indeed?—Give light! that I may know the truth!

LXXXIX.

"For my sick soul is darken'd unto death,
With shadows from the suffering it hath seen;
The strong foundations of mine ancient faith
Sink from beneath me—whereon shall I lean?—
Oh! if from *Thy* pure lips was wrung the sigh
Of the dust's anguish! if like man to die,—
And earth round *him* shuts heavily—hath been
Even to *Thee* bitter, aid me!—guide me!—turn
My wild and wandering thoughts back from their starless
bourne!"—

XC.

And calm'd I rose :—but how the while had risen
Morn's orient sun, dissolving mist and shade!—
Could there indeed be wrong, or chain, or prison,
In the bright world such radiance might pervade?
It fill'd the fane, it mantled the pale form
Which rose before me through the pictured storm,
Even the grey tombs it kindled, and array'd
With life!—How hard to see thy race begun,
And think man wakes to grief, wakening to *thee*, O Sun!

XCI.

I sought my home again :—and thou, my child,
There at thy play beneath yon ancient pine,
With eyes, whose lightning-laughter¹⁰ hath beguiled
A thousand pangs, thence flashing joy to mine ;
Thou in thy mother's arms, a babe, didst meet
My coming with young smiles, which yet, though sweet,
Seem'd on my soul all mournfully to shine,
And ask a happier heritage for thee,
Than but in turn the blight of human hope to see.

XCII.

Now sport, for thou art free, the bright birds chasing
Whose wings waft star-like gleams from tree to tree ;
Or with the fawn, thy swift wood-playmate racing,
Sport on, my joyous child ! for thou art free !
Yes, on that day I took thee to my heart,
And inly vow'd, for thee a better part
To choose ; that so thy sunny bursts of glee
Should wake no more dim thoughts of far-seen woe,
But, gladdening fearless eyes, flow on—as now they flow

XCIII.

Thou hast a rich world round thee :—Mighty shades
Weaving their gorgeous tracery o'er thy head,
With the light melting through their high arcades,
As through a pillar'd cloister's :¹¹ but the dead
Sleep not beneath ; nor doth the sunbeam pass
To marble shrines through rainbow-tinted glass ;
Yet thou, by fount and forest-murmur led
To worship, thou art blest !—to thee is shown
Earth in her holy pomp, deck'd for her God alone.

PART SECOND.

—o—
Wie diese treue liebe Seele
Von ihrem Glauben voll,
Der ganz allein
Ihr selig machend ist, sich heilig quäle,
Das sie den liebsten Mann verloren halten soll !—*Faust.*

I never shall smile more—but all my days
Walk with still footsteps and with humble eyes,
An everlasting hymn within my soul.—*WILSON.*

—o—
I.

BRING me the sounding of the torrent-water,
With yet a nearer swell—fresh breeze, awake !!
And river, darkening ne'er with hues of slaughter
Thy wave's pure silvery green,—and shining lake,
Spread far before my cabin, with thy zone
Of ancient woods, ye chainless things and lone !
Send voices through the forest aisles, and make
Glad music round me, that my soul may dare,
Cheer'd by such tones, to look back on a dungeon's air !

II.

O Indian hunter of the desert's race !
That with the spear at times, or bended bow,
Dost cross my footsteps in thy fiery chase
Of the swift elk or blue hill's flying roe ;
Thou that beside the red night-fire thou heapest,
Beneath the cedars and the star-light sleepest,
Thou know'st not, wanderer—never may'st thou know !
Of the dark holds wherewith man cumber's earth,
To shut from human eyes the dancing seasons' mirth.

III.

There, fetter'd down from day, to think the while
 How bright in Heaven the festal sun is glowing,
 Making earth's loneliest places, with his smile,
 Flush like the rose ; and how the streams are flowing
 With sudden sparkles through the shadowy grass,
 And water-flowers, all trembling as they pass ;
 And how the rich, dark summer-trees are bowing
 With their full foliage ;—this to know, and pine,
 Bound unto midnight's heart, seems a stern lot—'twas mine.

IV.

Wherefore was this ?—Because my soul had drawn
 Light from the book whose words are graved in light !
 There, at its well-head, had I found the dawn,
 And day, and noon of freedom :—but too bright
 It shines on that which man to man hath given,
 And call'd the truth—the very truth from Heaven !
 And therefore seeks he, in his brother's sight,
 To cast the mote ; and therefore strives to bind
 With his strong chains to earth, what is not earth's—the mind !

V.

It is a weary and a bitter task
 Back from the lip the burning word to keep,
 And to shut out Heaven's air with falsehood's mask,
 And in the dark urn of the soul to heap
 Indignant feelings—making even of thought
 A buried treasure, which may but be sought
 When shadows are abroad—and night—and sleep
 I might not brook it long—and thus was thrown
 Into that grave-like cell, to wither there alone.

VI.

And I, a child of danger, whose delights
 Were on dark hills and many-sounding seas—
 I, that amidst the Cordillera heights
 Had given Castilian banners to the breeze,
 And the full circle of the rainbow seen
 There, on the snows ?¹³ and in my country been
 A mountain wanderer, from the Pyrenees
 To the Morena crags—how left I not
 Life, or the soul's life, quench'd, on that sepulchral spot ?

VII.

Because *Thou* didst not leave me, O my God !
Thou wert with those that bore the truth of old
Into the deserts from the oppressor's rod,
And made the caverns of the rock their fold ;
And in the hidden chambers of the dead,
Our guiding lamp with fire immortal fed ;
And met when stars met, by their beams to hold
The free heart's communing with Thee,—and Thou
Wert in the midst, felt, own'd—the strengthener then as now !

VIII.

Yet once I sank. Alas ! man's wavering mind !
Wherefore and whence the gusts that o'er it blow ?
How they bear with them, floating uncombined
The shadows of the past, that come and go,
As o'er the deep the old long-buried things,
Which a storm's working to the surface brings !
Is the reed shaken,—and must *we* be so,
With every wind ?—So, Father ! must we be,
Till we can fix undimm'd our steadfast eyes on Thee.

IX.

Once my soul died within me. What had thrown
That sickness o'er it ?—Even a passing thought
Of a clear spring, whose side, with flowers o'ergrown,
Fondly and oft my boyish steps had sought !
Perchance the damp roof's water-drops, that fell
Just then, low tinkling through my vaulted cell,
Intensely heard amidst the stillness, caught
Some tone from memory, of the music, welling
ver with that fresh rill, from its deep rocky dwelling.

X.

But so my spirit's fever'd longings wrought
Wakening, it might be, to the faint, sad sound,
That from the darkness of the walls they brought
A loved scene round me, visibly around.¹⁴
Yes ! kindling, spreading, brightening, hue by hue,
Like stars from midnight, through the gloom it grew,
That haunt of youth, hope, manhood !—till the bound
Of my shut cavern seem'd dissolved, and I
Girt by the solemn hills and burning pomp of sky.

XI.

I look'd—and lo ! the clear, broad river flowing,
Past the old Moorish ruin on the steep,
The lone tower dark against a Heaven all glowing,
Like seas of glass and fire !—I saw the sweep
Of glorious woods far down the mountain side,
And their still shadows in the gleaming tide,
And the red evening on its waves asleep ;
And midst the scene—oh ! more than all—there smiled
My child's fair face, and hers, the mother of my child !

XII.

With their soft eyes of love and gladness raised
Up to the flushing sky, as when we stood
Last by that river, and in silence gazed
On the rich world of sunset :—but a flood
Of sudden tenderness my soul oppress'd,
And I rush'd forward with a yearning breast,
To clasp—alas !—a vision !—Wave and wood,
And gentle faces, lifted in the light
Of day's last hectic blush, all melted from my sight.

XIII.

Then darkness !—Oh ! th' unutterable gloom
That seem'd as narrowing round me, making less
And less my dungeon, when, with all its bloom,
That bright dream vanish'd from my loneliness !
It floated off, the beautiful !—yet left
Such deep thirst in my soul, that thus bereft,
I lay down, sick with passion's vain excess,
And pray'd to die.—How oft would sorrow weep
Her weariness to death, if he might come like sleep !

XIV.

But I was roused—and how ?—It is no tale
Even midst *thy* shades, thou wilderness, to tell !
I would not have my boy's young cheek made pale,
Nor haunt his sunny rest with what befel
In that drear prison-house. His eye must grow
More dark with thought, more earnest his fair brow,
More high his heart in youthful strength must swell ;
So shall it fitly burn when all is told :—
Let childhood's radiant mist the free child yet infold !

XV.

It is enough that through such heavy hours,
As wring us by our fellowship of clay,
I lived, and undegraded. We have powers
To snatch th' oppressor's bitter joy away !
Shall the wild Indian, for his savage fame,
Laugh and expire, and shall not Truth's high name
Bear up her martyrs with all-conquering sway ?
It is enough that Torture may be vain—
I had seen Alvar die—the strife was won from Pain.

XVI.

And faint not, heart of man ! though years wane slow :
There have been those that from the deepest caves,
And cells of night, and fastnesses below
The stormy dashing of the ocean-waves,
Down, farther down than gold lies hid, have nursed
A quenchless hope, and watch'd their time, and burst
On the bright day, like wakeners from the graves !
I was of such at last !—unchain'd I trod
This green earth, taking back my freedom from my God !

XVII.

That was an hour to send its fadeless trace
Down life's far-sweeping tide !—A dim, wild night,
Like sorrow, hung upon the soft moon's face,
Yet how my heart leap'd in her blessed light !
The shepherd's light—the sailor's on the sea—
The hunter's homeward from the mountains free,
Where its lone smile makes tremulously bright
The thousand streams !—I could but gaze through tears—
Oh ! what a sight is heaven, thus first beheld for years !

XVIII.

The rolling clouds !—they have the whole blue space
Above to sail in—all the dome of sky !
My soul shot with them in their breezy race
O'er star and gloom !—but I had yet to fly,
As flies the hunted wolf. A secret spot
And strange, I knew—the sunbeam knew it not ;—
Wildest of all the savage glens that lie
In far sierras, hiding their deep springs,
And traversed but by storms, or sounding eagles' wings

XIX.

Ay, and I met the storm there !—I had gain'd
The covert's heart with swift and stealthy tread :
A moan went past me, and the dark trees rain'd
Their autumn foliage rustling on my head ;
A moan—a hollow gust, and there I stood
Girt with majestic night, and ancient wood,
And foaming water.—Thither might have fled
The mountain Christian with his faith of yore,
When Afric's tambour shook the ringing western shore !

XX.

But through the black ravine the storm came swelling,
Mighty thou art amidst the hills, thou blast !
In thy lone course the kingly cedars felling,
Like plumes upon the path of battle cast !
A rent oak thunder'd down beside my cave,
Booming it rush'd, as booms a deep sea-wave ;
A falcon soar'd ; a startled wild-deer pass'd ;
A far-off bell toll'd faintly through the roar :—
How my glad spirit swept forth with the winds once more !

XXI.

And with the arrowy lightnings !—for they flash'd,
Smiting the branches in their fitful play,
And brightly shivering where the torrents dash'd
Up, even to crag and eagle's nest, their spray !
And there to stand amidst the pealing strife,
The strong pines groaning with tempestuous life,
And all the mountain-voices on their way,—
Was it not joy ?—'twas joy in rushing might,
After those years that wove but one long dead of night !

XXII.

There came a softer hour, a lovelier moon,
And lit me to my home of youth again,
Through the dim chestnut shade, where oft at noon,
By the fount's flashing burst, my head had lain
In gentle sleep : but now I pass'd as one
That may not pause where wood-streams whispering run,
Or light sprays tremble to a bird's wild strain,
Because th' avenger's voice is in the wind,
The foe's quick, rustling step close on the leaves behind.

XXIII.

My home of youth !—oh ! if indeed to part
With the soul's loved ones be a mournful thing,
When we go forth in buoyancy of heart,
And bearing all the glories of our spring
For life to breathe on,—is it less to meet,
When these are faded ?—who shall call it sweet ?—
Even though love's mingling tears may haply bring
Balm as they fall, too well their heavy showers
Teach us how much is lost of all that once was ours !

XXIV

Not by the sunshine, with its golden glow,
Nor the green earth, nor yet the laughing sky,
Nor the faint flower-scents,¹⁵ as they come and go
In the soft air, like music wandering by ;—
Oh ! not by these, th' unfailing, are we taught
How time and sorrow on our frames have wrought ;
But by the sadden'd eye, the darken'd brow
Of kindred aspects, and the long dim gaze,
Which tells us *we* are changed,—how changed from other days !

XXV.

Before my father—in my place of birth,
I stood an alien. On the very floor
Which oft had trembled to my boyish mirth,
The love that rear'd me, knew my face no more !
There hung the antique armour, helm and crest,
Whose every stain woke childhood in my breast,
There droop'd the banner, with the marks it bore
Of Paynim spears ; and I, the worn in frame
And heart, what there was I ?—another and the same !

XXVI.

Then bounded in a boy, with clear, dark eye—
How should *he* know his father ?—when we parted,
From the soft cloud which mantles infancy,
His soul, just wakening into wonder, darted
Its first looks round. Him follow'd one, the bride
Of my young days, the wife how loved and tried !
Her glance met mine—I could not speak—she started
With a bewilder'd gaze ;—until there came
Tears to my burning eyes, and from my lips her name.

XXVII.

She knew me then !—I murmur'd "*Leonor* !"
And her heart answer'd !—oh ! the voice is known
First from all else, and swiftest to restore
Love's buried images, with one low tone
That strikes like lightning, when the cheek is faded,
And the brow heavily with thought o'ershaded,
And all the brightness from the aspect gone !—
Upon my breast she sunk, when doubt was fled,
Weeping as those may weep, that meet in woe and dread.

XXVIII.

For there we might not rest. Alas ! to leave
Those native towers, and know that they must fall
By slow decay, and none remain to grieve
When the weeds cluster'd on the lonely wall !
We were the last—my boy and I—the last
Of a long line which brightly thence had pass'd !
My father bless'd me as I left his hall—
With his deep tones and sweet, though full of years,
He bless'd me there, and bathed my child's young head with
tears.

XXIX.

I had brought sorrow on his grey hairs down,
And cast the darkness of my branded name
(For so *he* deem'd it) on the clear renown,
My own ancestral heritage of fame.
And yet he bless'd me !—Father ! if the dust
Lie on those lips benign, my spirit's trust
Is to behold thee yet, where grief and shame
Dim the bright day no more ; and thou wilt know
That not through guilt thy son thus bow'd thine age with woe !

XXX.

And thou, my *Leonor* ! that unrepining,
If sad in soul, didst quit all else for me,
When stars—the stars that earliest rise—are shining,
How their soft glance unseals each thought of thee !
For on our flight they smiled ; their dewy rays,
Through the last olives, lit thy tearful gaze
Back to the home we never more might see ;
So pass'd we on, like earth's first exiles, turning
Fond looks where hung the sword above their Eden burning.

XXXI.

It was a woe to say, "Farewell, my Spain!
The sunny and the vintage land, farewell!"—
I could have died upon the battle-plain
For thee, my country! but I might not dwell
In thy sweet vales, at peace.—The voice of song
Breathes, with the myrtle scent, thy hills along;
The citron's glow is caught from shade and dell;
But what are these!—upon thy flowery sod
I might not kneel, and pour my free thoughts out to God!

XXXII.

O'er the blue deep I fled, the chainless deep!—
Strange heart of man! that ev'n midst woe swells high,
When through the foam he sees his proud bark sweep,
Flinging out joyous gleams to wave and sky!
Yes! it swells high, whate'er he leaves behind;
His spirit rises with the rising wind;
For, wedded to the far futurity,
On, on, it bears him ever, and the main
Seems rushing, like his hope, some happier shore to gain.

XXXIII.

Not thus is woman. Closely *her* still heart
Doth twine itself with ev'n each lifeless thing,
Which, long remember'd, seem'd to bear its part
In her calm joys. For ever would she cling,
A brooding dove, to that sole spot of earth
Where she hath loved, and given her children birth,
And heard their first sweet voices. There may Spring
Array no path, renew no flower, no leaf,
But hath its breath of home, its claim to farewell grief.

XXXIV.

I look'd on Leonor,—and if there seem'd
A cloud of more than pensiveness to rise
In the faint smiles that o'er her features gleam'd,
And the soft darkness of her serious eyes,
Misty with tender gloom, I call'd it nought
But the fond exile's pang, a lingering thought
Of her own vale, with all its melodies
And living light of streams. Her soul would rest
Beneath your shades, I said, bowers of the gorgeous west!

B B

XXXV.

Oh ! could we live in visions ! could we hold
Delusion faster, longer, to our breast,
When it shuts from us, with its mantle's fold,
That which we see not, and are therefore blest !
But they, our loved and loving, they to whom
We have spread out our souls in joy and gloom,
Their looks and accents, unto ours address'd,
Have been a language of familiar tone
Too long to breathe, at last, dark sayings and unknown.

XXXVI.

I told my heart, 'twas but the exile's woe
Which press'd on that sweet bosom ;—I deceived
My heart but half :—a whisper, faint and low,
Haunting it ever, and at times believed,
Spoke of some deeper cause. How oft we seem
Like those that dream, and *know* the while they dream,
Midst the soft falls of airy voices grieved,
And troubled, while bright phantoms round them play,
By a dim sense that all will float and fade away !

XXXVII.

Yet, as if chasing joy, I woo'd the breeze
To speed me onward with the wings of morn.—
Oh ! far amidst the solitary seas,
Which were not made for man, what man hath borne,
Answering their moan with his !—what *thou* didst bear
My lost and loveliest ! while that secret care
Grew terror, and thy gentle spirit, worn
By its dull brooding weight, gave way at last,
Beholding me as one from hope for ever cast !

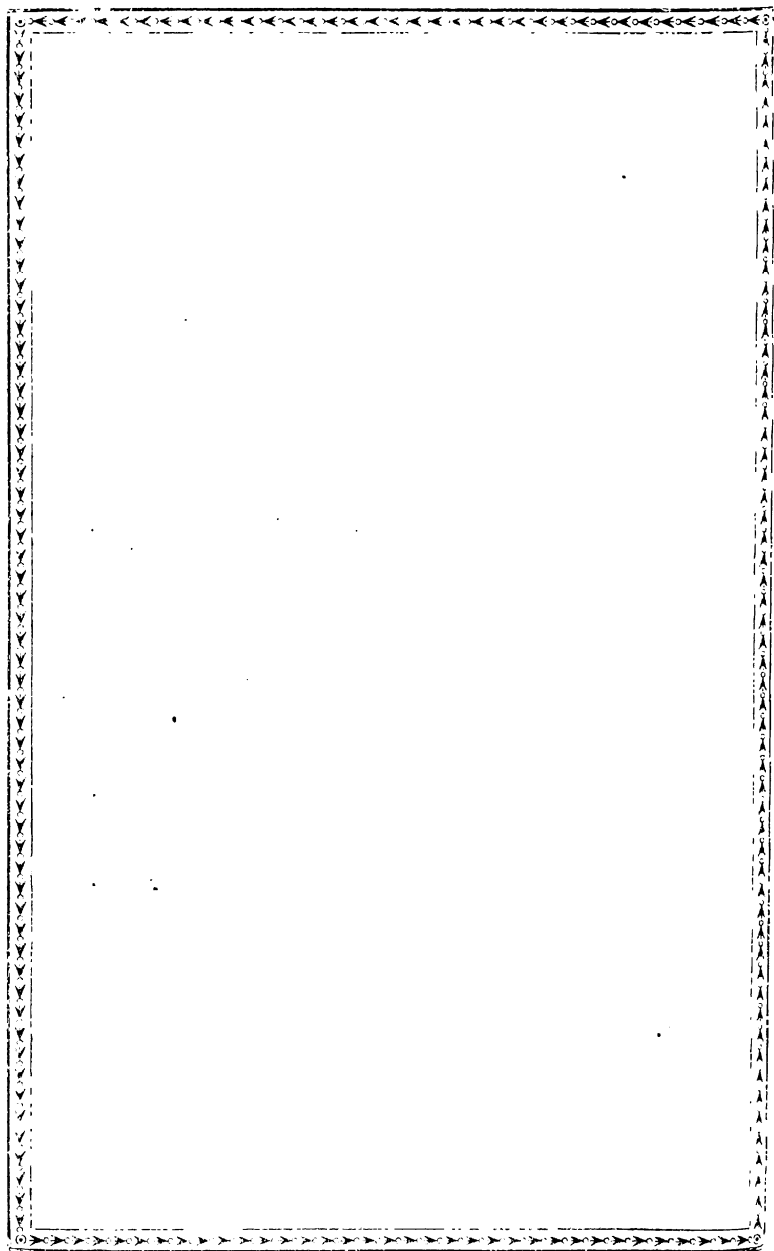
XXXVIII.

For unto thee, as through all change, reveal'd
Mine inward being lay. In other eyes
I had to bow me yet, and make a shield,
To fence my burning bosom, of disguise ;
By the still hope sustain'd, ere long to win
Some sanctuary, whose green retreats within,
My thoughts unfetter'd to their source might rise,
Like songs and scents of morn.—But thou didst look
Through all my soul, and thine even unto fainting shook.



"He stood there still, with a drooping brow"

L. 415.



XXXIX.

Fallen, fallen, I seem'd—yet, oh ! not less beloved,
Though from thy love was pluck'd the early pride,
And harshly, by a gloomy faith reproved,
And sear'd with shame !—though each young flower had died,
There was the root,—strong, living, not the less
That all it yielded now was bitterness ;
Yet still such love as quits not misery's side
Nor drops from guilt its ivy-like embrace,
Nor turns away from death's its pale heroic face.

XL.

Yes ! thou hadst follow'd me through fear and flight !
Thou wouldst have follow'd had my pathway led
Even to the scaffold ; had the flashing light
Of the raised axe made strong men shrink with dread,
Thou, midst the hush of thousands, wouldst have been
With thy clasp'd hands beside me kneeling seen,
And meekly bowing to the shame thy head—
The shame !—oh ! making beautiful to view
The might of human love—fair thing ! so bravely true !

XLI.

There was thine agony—to love so well
Where fear made love life's chastener.—Heretofore
Whate'er of earth's disquiet round thee fell,
Thy soul, o'erpassing its dim bounds, could soar
Away to sunshine, and thy clear eye speak
Most of the skies when grief most touch'd thy cheek.
Now, that far brightness faded ! never more
Couldst thou lift heavenwards for its hope thy heart,
Since at Heaven's gate it seem'd that thou and I must part.

XLII.

Alas ! and life hath moments when a glance—
(If thought to sudden watchfulness be stirr'd,)
A flush—a fading of the cheek perchance,
A word—less, less—the *cadence* of a word,
Lets in our gaze the mind's dim veil beneath,
Thence to bring haply knowledge fraught with death !
Even thus, what never from thy lip was heard
Broke on my soul.—I knew that in thy sight
I stood—howe'er beloved—a recreant from the light !

XLIII.

Thy sad, sweet hymn, at eve, the seas along,—
 Oh ! the deep soul it breathed !—the love, the woe,
 The fervour, pour'd in that full gush of song,
 As it went floating through the fiery glow
 Of the rich sunset !—bringing thoughts of Spain,
 With all her vesper-voices, o'er the main,
 Which seem'd responsive in its murmuring flow.—
 “*Ave sanctissima !*”—how oft that lay
 Hath melted from my heart the martyr-strength away !

Ave, sanctissima !
 'Tis night-fall on the sea ;
 Ora pro nobis !
 Our souls rise to Thee !

Watch us, while shadows lie
 O'er the dim water spread ;
 Hear the heart's lonely sigh,—
 Thine, too, hath bled !

Thou that hast look'd on death,
 Aid us when death is near !
 Whisper of Heaven to faith ;
 Sweet Mother, hear !

Ora pro nobis !
 The wave must rock our sleep,
 Ora, Mater, ora !
 Thou star of the deep !

XLIV.

“*Ora pro nobis, Mater !*”—What a spell
 Was in those notes, with day's last glory dying
 On the flush'd waters !—seem'd they not to swell
 From the far dust, wherein my sires were lying
 With crucifix and sword ?—Oh ! yet how clear
 Comes their reproachful sweetness to mine ear !
 “*Ora !*”—with all the purple waves replying,
 All my youth's visions rising in the strain—
 And I had thought it much to bear the rock and chain !

XLV.

Torture !—the sorrow of affection's eye,
Fixing its meekness on the spirit's core,
Deeper, and teaching more of agony,
May pierce than many swords !—and this I bore
With a mute pang. Since I had vainly striven
From its free springs to pour the truth of Heaven
Into thy trembling soul, my Leonor !
Silence rose up where hearts no hope could share :—
Alas ! for those that love, and may not blend in prayer !

XLVI.

We could not pray together midst the deep,
Which, like a floor of sapphire, round us lay,
Through days of splendour, nights too bright for sleep,
Soft, solemn, holy !—We were on our way
Unto the mighty Cordillera-land,
With men whom tales of that world's golden strand
Had lured to leave their vines.—Oh ! who shall say
What thoughts rose in us, when the tropic sky
Touch'd all its molten seas with sunset's alchemy ?

XLVII.

Thoughts no more mingled !—Then came night—th' intense
Dark blue—the burning stars !—I saw *thee* shine
Once more, in thy serene magnificence,
O Southern Cross !¹⁶ as when thy radiant sign
First drew my gaze of youth.—No, not as then ;
I had been stricken by the darts of men
Since those fresh days ; and now thy light divine
Look'd on mine anguish, while within me strove
The still small voice against the might of suffering love.

XLVIII.

But thou, the clear, the glorious ! thou wert pouring
Brilliance and joy upon the crystal wave,
While she that met thy ray with eyes adoring,
Stood in the lengthening shadow of the grave !—
Alas ! I watch'd her dark religious glance,
As it still sought thee through the Heaven's expanse,
Bright Cross !—and knew not that I watch'd what gave
But passing lustre—shrouded soon to be—
A soft light found no more—no more on earth or sea !

XLIX.

I knew not all—yet something of unrest
Sat on my heart. Wake, ocean wind ! I said ;
Waft us to land, in leafy freshness drest,
Where through rich clouds of foliage o'er her head,
Sweet day may steal, and rills unseen go by,
Like singing voices, and the green earth lie
Starry with flowers, beneath her graceful tread !—
But the calm bound us midst the glassy main ;
Ne'er was her step to bend earth's living flowers again

L.

Yes ! as if Heaven upon the waves were sleeping,
Vexing my soul with quiet, there they lay,
All moveless, through their blue transparence keeping
The shadows of our sails, from day to day !
While she—oh ! strongest is the strong heart's woe—
And yet I live ! I feel the sunshine's glow—
And I am he that look'd, and saw decay
Steal o'er the fair of earth, th' adored too much !—
It is a fearful thing to love what death may touch.

LI.

A fearful thing that love and death may dwell
In the same world !—She faded on—and I—
Blind to the last, there needed death to tell
My trusting soul that she *could* fade to die !
Yet, ere she parted, I had mark'd a change,—
But it breathed hope—'twas beautiful, though strange :
Something of gladness in the melody
Of her low voice, and in her words a flight
Of airy thought—alas ! too perilously bright !

LII.

And a clear sparkle in her glance, yet wild,
And quick, and eager, like the flashing gaze
Of some all-wondering and awakening child,
That first the glories of the earth surveys.—
How could it thus deceive me ?—she had worn
Around her, like the dewy mists of morn,
A pensive tenderness through happiest days ;
And a soft world of dreams had seem'd to lie
Still in her dark, and deep, and spiritual eye.

LIII.

And I could hope in that strange fire!—she died,
She died, with all its lustre on her mien!—
The day was melting from the waters wide,
And through its long bright hours her thoughts had been,
It seem'd, with restless and unwonted yearning,
To Spain's blue skies and dark sierras turning;
For her fond words were all of vintage-scene,
And flowering myrtle, and sweet citron's breath :—
Oh ! with what vivid hues life comes back oft on death !

LIV.

And from her lips the mountain-songs of old,
In wild, faint snatches, fitfully had sprung ;
Songs of the orange bower, the Moorish glow,
The "*Rio verde*,"¹⁷ on her soul that hung,
And thence flow'd forth.—But now the sun was low ;
And watching by my side its last red glow,
That ever stills the heart, once more she sung
Her own soft "*Ora, Mater!*"—and the sound
Was even like love's farewell—so mournfully profound.

LV.

The boy had dropp'd to slumber at our feet ;—
"And I have lull'd him to his smiling rest
Once more !" she said :—I raised him—it was sweet,
Yet sad, to see the perfect calm which bless'd
His look that hour ;—for now her voice grew weak ;
And on the flowery crimson of his cheek,
With her white lips a long, long kiss she press'd,
Yet light, to wake him not.—Then sank her head
Against my bursting heart :—What did I clasp ?—the dead !

LVI.

I call'd—to call what answers not our cries,
By that we loved to stand unseen, unheard,
With the loud passion of our tears and sighs
To see but some cold glistening ringlet stirred,
And in the quench'd eye's fixedness to gaze,
All vainly searching for the parted rays ;
This is what waits us !—Dead !—with that chill word
To link our bosom-names !—For this we pour
Our souls upon the dust—nor tremble to adore !

LVII.

But the true parting came !—I look'd my last
 On the sad beauty of that slumbering face ;
 How could I think the lovely spirit pass'd,
 Which there had left so tenderly its trace ?
 Yet a dim awfulness was on the brow—
 No ! not like sleep to look upon art Thou,
 Death, Death !—She lay, a thing for earth's embrace,
 To cover with spring-wreaths. For earth's ? the wave—
 That gives the bier no flowers—makes moan above her grave !

LVIII.

On the mid-seas a knell !—for man was there,
 Anguish and love—the mourner with his dead !
 A long, low-rolling knell—a voice of prayer—
 Dark glassy waters, like a desert spread,—
 And the pale-shining Southern Cross on high,
 Its faint stars fading from a solemn sky,
 Where mighty clouds before the dawn grew red :—
 Were these things round me ? Such o'er memory sweep
 Wildly when aught brings back that burial of the deep.

LIX.

Then the broad, lonely sunrise !—and the plash
 Into the sounding waves !¹⁸—around her head
 They parted, with a glancing moment's flash,
 Then shut—and all was still. And now thy bed
 Is of their secrets, gentlest Leonor !
 Once fairest of young brides !—and never more,
 Loved as thou wert, may human tear be shed
 Above thy rest !—No mark the proud seas keep,
 To show where he that wept may pause again to weep.

LX.

So the depths took thee !—Oh ! the sullen sense
 Of desolation in that hour compress'd !
 Dust going down, a speck, amidst th' immense
 And gloomy waters, leaving on their breast
 The trace a weed might leave there !—Dust ?—the thing
 Which to the heart was as a living spring
 Of joy, with fearfulness of love possess'd,
 Thus sinking !—Love, joy, fear, all crush'd to this—
 And the wide Heaven so far—so fathomless th' abyss !

LXI.

Where the line sounds not, where the wrecks lie low,
What shall wake thence the dead?—Blest, blest are they
That earth to earth intrust; for they may know
And tend the dwelling whence the slumberer's clay
Shall rise at last; and bid the young flowers bloom,
That waft a breath of hope around the tomb;
And kneel upon the dewy turf to pray!
But thou, what cave hath dimly chamber'd thee?
Vain dreams!—oh! art thou not where there is no more sea?¹⁹

LXII.

The wind rose free and singing:—when for ever,
O'er that sole spot of all the watery plain,
I could have bent my sight with fond endeavour
Down, where its treasure was, its glance to strain;
Then rose the reckless wind!—Before our prow
The white foam flash'd—ay, joyously—and thou
Wert left with all the solitary main
Around thee—and thy beauty in my heart,
And thy meek sorrowing love—oh! where could *that* depart?

LXIII.

I will not speak of woe; I may not tell—
Friend tells not such to friend—the thoughts which rent
My fainting spirit, when its wild farewell
Across the billows to thy grave was sent,
Thou, there most lonely!—He that sits above,
In His calm glory, will forgive the love
His creatures bear each other, ev'n if blent
With a vain worship; for its close is dim
Ever with grief, which leads the wrung soul back to Him!

LXIV.

And with a milder pang if now I bear
To think of thee in thy forsaken rest,
If from my heart be lifted the despair,
The sharp remorse with healing influence press'd,
If the soft eyes that visit me in sleep
Look not reproach, though still they seem to weep;
It is that He my sacrifice hath bless'd,
And fill'd my bosom, through its inmost cell,
With a deep chastening sense that all at last is well.

LXV.

Yes! thou art now—Oh! wherefore doth the thought
Of the wave dashing o'er thy long bright hair,
The sea-weed into its dark tresses wrought,
The sand thy pillow—thou that wert so fair!
Come o'er me still?—Earth, earth!—it is the hold
Earth ever keeps on that of earthly mould!
But *thou* art breathing now in purer air,
I well believe, and freed from all of error,
Which blighted here the root of thy sweet life with terror

LXVI.

And if the love, which here was passing light,
Went with what died not—Oh! that *this* we knew,
But this!—that through the silence of the night,
Some voice, of all the lost ones and the true,
Would speak, and say, if in their far repose,
We are yet aught of what we were to those
We call the dead!—their passionate adieu,
Was it but breath, to perish?—Holier trust
Be mine!—thy love *is* there, but purified from dust!

LXVII.

A thing all heavenly!—clear'd from that which hung
As a dim cloud between us, heart and mind!
Loosed from the fear, the grief, whose tendrils flung
A chain, so darkly with its growth entwined.
This is my hope!—though when the sunset fades,
When forests rock the midnight on their shades,
When tones of wail are in the rising wind,
Across my spirit some faint doubt may sigh;
For the strong hours *will* sway this frail mortality!

LXVIII.

We have been wanderers since those days of woe,
Thy boy and I!—As wild birds tend their young,
So have I tended him—my bounding roe!
The high Peruvian solitudes among;
And o'er the Andes' torrents borne his form,
Where our frail bridge hath quiver'd midst the storm.
But there the war-notes of my country rung,
And, smitten deep of Heaven and man, I fled
To hide in shades unpierced a mark'd and weary head.

LXIX.

But he went on in gladness—that fair child !
Save when at times his bright eye seem'd to dream,
And his young lips, which then no longer smiled,
Ask'd of his mother !—That was but a gleam
Of Memory, fleeting fast ;—and then his play
Through the wide Llanos²¹ cheer'd again our way,
And by the mighty Oronoco stream,
On whose lone margin we have heard at morn,
From the mysterious rocks, the sunrise-music borne.²²

LXX.

So like a spirit's voice ! a harping tone,
Lovely, yet ominous to mortal ear,
Such as might reach us from a world unknown,
Troubling man's heart with thrills of joy and fear !
'Twas sweet !—yet those deep southern shades oppress'd
My soul with stillness, like the calms that rest
On melancholy waves :²³ I sigh'd to hear
Once more earth's breezy sounds, her foliage fann'd,
And turn'd to seek the wilds of the red hunter's land.

LXXI.

And we have won a bower of refuge now,
In this fresh waste, the breath of whose repose
Hath cool'd, like dew, the fever of my brow,
And whose green oaks and cedars round me close
As temple-walls and pillars, that exclude
Earth's haunted dreams from their free solitude ;
All, save the image and the thought of those
Before us gone ; our loved of early years,
Gone where affection's cup hath lost the taste of tears

LXXII.

I see a star—eve's first-born !—in whose train
Past scenes, words, looks, come back. The arrowy spire
Of the lone cypress, as of wood-girt fane,
Rests dark and still amidst a heaven of fire ;
The pine gives forth its odours, and the lake
Gleams like one ruby, and the soft winds wake
Till every string of nature's solemn lyre
Is touch'd to answer ; its most secret tone
Drawn from each tree, for each hath whispers all its own.

LXXIII.

And hark ! another murmur on the air,
Not of the hidden rills, or quivering shades !—
That is the cataract's, which the breezes bear,
Filling the leafy twilight of the glades
With hollow surge-like sounds, as from the bed
Of the blue, mournful seas, that keep the dead :
But *they* are far !—the low sun here pervades
Dim forest-arches, bathing with red gold
Their stems, till each is made a marvel to behold, -

LXXIV.

Gorgeous, yet full of gloom !—In such an hour,
The Vesper-melody of dying bells
Wanders through Spain, from each grey convent's tower
O'er shining rivers pour'd, and olive-dells,
By every peasant heard, and muleteer,
And hamlet, round my home :—and I am here,
Living again through all my life's farewells,
In these vast woods, where farewell ne'er was spoken,
And sole I lift to Heaven a sad heart—yet unbroken !

LXXV.

In such an hour are told the hermit's beads ;
With the white sail the seaman's hymn floats by :
Peace be with all ! whate'er their varying creeds,
With all that send up holy thoughts on high !
Come to me, boy !—by Guadalquivir's vines,
By every stream of Spain, as day declines,
Man's prayers are mingled in the rosy sky.—
We, too, will pray ; nor yet unheard, my child !
Of Him whose voice we hear at eve amidst the wild.

LXXVI.

At eve?—oh ! through all hours !—From dark dreams oft
Awakening, I look forth, and learn the might
Of solitude, while thou art breathing soft,
And low, my loved one ! on the breast of night :
I look forth on the stars—the shadowy sleep
Of forests—and the lake, whose gloomy deep
Sends up red sparkles to the fire-flies' light.
A lonely world !—ev'n fearful to man's thought,
But for His presence felt, whom here my soul hath sought.

NOTES.

NOTE 1.

And sighing through the feathery canes, &c.

The canes, in some parts of the American forests, form a thick undergrowth for many hundred miles.—See HODGSON'S *Letters from North America*, vol. i. p. 242.

NOTE 2.

And for their birth-place moan, as moans the ocean-shell

Such a shell as Wordsworth has beautifully described :—

“ I have seen
A curious child, who dwelt upon a tract
Of inland ground, applying to his ear
The convolutions of a smooth-lipp'd shell ;
To which, in silence hush'd, his very soul
Listen'd intently, and his countenance soon
Brighten'd with joy ; for murmurings from within
Were heard—sonorous cadences ! whereby,
To his belief, the monitor express'd
Mysterious union with its native sea.—
Even such a shell the universe itself
Is to the ear of Faith.”—*The Excursion*.

NOTE 3.

I see an oak before me, &c.

“ I recollect hearing a traveller, of poetical temperament, expressing the kind of horror which he felt on beholding, on the banks of the Missouri, an oak of prodigious size, which had been

in a manner overpowered by an enormous wild-grape vine. The vine had clasped its huge folds round the trunk, and from thence had wound about every branch and twig, until the mighty tree had withered in its embrace. It seemed like Laocoon struggling ineffectually in the hideous coils of the monster Python."—*Brucebridge Hall*. Chapter on Forest Trees.

NOTE 4.

*Thou hast perish'd
More nobly far, my Alvar!—making known
The might of truth.*

For a most interesting account of the Spanish Protestants, and the heroic devotion with which they met the spirit of persecution in the sixteenth century, see the *Quarterly Review*, No. 57, art. Quin's Visit to Spain.

NOTE 5.

*I look'd on two,
Following his footsteps to the same dread place,
For the same guilt—his sisters!—*

"A priest, named Gonzalez, had, among other proselytes, gained over two young females, his sisters, to the protestant faith. All three were confined in the dungeons of the Inquisition. The torture, repeatedly applied, could not draw from them the least evidence against their religious associates. Every artifice was employed to obtain a recantation from the two sisters, since the constancy and learning of Gonzalez precluded all hopes of a theological victory. Their answer, if not exactly logical, is wonderfully simple and affecting. 'We will die in the faith of our brother: he is too wise to be wrong, and too good to deceive us.'—The three stakes on which they died were near each other. The priest had been gagged till the moment of lighting up the wood. The few minutes that he was allowed to speak he employed in comforting his sisters, with whom he sung the 109th Psalm, till the flames smothered their voices."—*Ibid*.

NOTE 6.

*And deem the name
A hundred chiefs had borne, cast down by you to shame.*

The names, not only of the immediate victims of the Inquisition, were devoted to infamy, but those of all their relations were

branded with the same indelible stain, which was likewise to descend as an inheritance to their latest posterity.

NOTE 7.

*'Twas not within the city—but in sight
Of the snow-crown'd sierras.*

The piles erected for these executions were without the towns, and the final scene of an Auto da Fe was sometimes, from the length of the preceding ceremonies, delayed till midnight.

NOTE 8.

*I would have call'd, adjuring the dark cloud :
To the most ancient Heavens I would have said,
" Speak to me ! show me truth ! "*

For one of the most powerful and impressive pictures perhaps ever drawn, of a young mind struggling against habit and superstition in its first aspirations after truth, see the admirable Letters from Spain by Don Leucadio Doblado.

NOTE 9.

*For thick ye girt me round, ye long departed !
Dust—imaged form—with cross, and shield, and crest.*

" You walk from end to end over a floor of tombstones, inlaid in brass with the forms of the departed, mitres, and crosiers, and spears, and shields, and helmets, all mingled together—all worn into glass-like smoothness by the feet and the knees of long-departed worshippers. Around, on every side, each in their separate chapel, sleep undisturbed from age to age the venerable ashes of the holiest or the loftiest that of old came thither to worship—their images and their dying prayers sculptured among the resting-places of their remains."—From a beautiful description of ancient Spanish Cathedrals, in PETER'S *Letters to his Kinsfolk*.

NOTE 10.

*With eyes, whose lightning laughter hath beguiled
A thousand pangs.*

" E'l lampeggiar de l' angelico riso. "—PETRARCH.

C C

NOTE II.

*Mighty shades
Weaving their gorgeous tracery o'er thy head,
With the light melting through their high arcades,
As through a pillar'd cloister's.*

"Sometimes their discourse was held in the deep shades of moss-grown forests, whose gloom and interlaced boughs first suggested that Gothic architecture, beneath whose pointed arches, where they had studied and prayed, the parti-coloured windows shed a tinged light; scenes, which the gleams of sunshine, penetrating the deep foliage, and flickering on the variegated turf below, might have recalled to their memory."—Webster's "Oration on the Landing of the Pilgrim Fathers in New England."—See HODGSON's *Letters from North America*, vol. ii. p. 305.

NOTE 12.

*Bring me the sounding of the torrent water,
With yet a nearer swell—fresh breeze, awake!*

The varying sounds of waterfalls are thus alluded to in an interesting work of Mrs. Grant's. "On the opposite side the view was bounded by steep hills, covered with lofty pines, from which a waterfall descended, which not only gave animation to the sylvan scene, but was the best barometer imaginable; foretelling by its varied and intelligible sounds every approaching change, not only of the weather but of the wind."—*Memoirs of an American Lady*, vol. i. p. 143.

NOTE 13.

*And the full circle of the rainbow seen
There, on the snows.*

The circular rainbows, occasionally seen amongst the Andes, are described by Ulloa.

NOTE 14.

*But so my spirit's fever'd longings wrought,
Wakening, it might be, to the faint, sad sound,
That from the darkness of the walls they brought
A loved scene round me, visibly around.*

Many striking instances of the vividness with which the mind,

when strongly excited, has been known to renovate past impressions, and embody them into visible imagery, are noticed and accounted for in Dr. Hibbert's "Philosophy of Apparitions." The following illustrative passage is quoted in the same work, from the writings of the late Dr. Ferriar. "I remember that, about the age of fourteen, it was a source of great amusement to myself, if I had been viewing any interesting object in the course of the day, such as a romantic ruin, a fine seat, or a review of a body of troops, as soon as evening came on, if I had occasion to go into a dark room, the whole scene was brought before my eyes with a brilliancy equal to what it had possessed in daylight, and remained visible for several minutes. I have no doubt that dismal and frightful images have been thus presented to young persons after scenes of domestic affliction or public horror."

The following passage from the "Alcazar of Seville," a tale, or historical sketch, by the author of Doblado's letters, affords a further illustration of this subject. "When, descending fast into the vale of years, I strongly fix my mind's eye on those narrow, shady, silent streets, where I breathed the scented air which came rustling through the surrounding groves; where the footsteps re-echoed from the clean watered porches of the houses, and where every object spoke of quiet and contentment; the objects around me begin to fade into a mere delusion, and not only the thoughts, but the external sensations, which I then experience, revive with a reality that almost makes me shudder—it has so much the character of a trance or vision."

NOTE 15.

*Nor the faint flower-scents, as they come and go
In the soft air, like music wandering by.*

"For because the breath of flowers is farre sweeter in the aire (where it comes and goes like the warbling of musick) than in the hand, therefore nothing is more fit for that delight than to know what be the flowers and plants which doe best perfume the aire."—
LORD BACON'S *Essay on Gardens*.

NOTE 16.

*I saw thee shine
Once more, in thy serene magnificence,
O Southern Cross!*

"The pleasure we felt on discovering the Southern Cross was

warmly shared by such of the crew as had lived in the colonies. In the solitude of the seas, we hail a star as a friend from whom we have long been separated. Among the Portuguese and the Spaniards, peculiar motives seem to increase this feeling; a religious sentiment attaches them to a constellation, the form of which recalls the sign of the faith planted by their ancestors in the deserts of the New World. It has been observed at what hour of the night, in different seasons, the Cross of the South is erect or inclined. It is a time-piece that advances very regularly near four minutes a day, and no other group of stars exhibits to the naked eye an observation of time so easily made. How often have we heard our guides exclaim, in the savannahs of Venezuela, or in the desert extending from Lima to Truxillo, 'Midnight is past, the Cross begins to bend!' How often these words reminded us of that affecting scene where Paul and Virginia, seated near the source of the river of Lataniers, conversed together for the last time; and where the old man, at the sight of the Southern Cross, warns them that it is time to separate!—DE HUMBOLDT'S *Travels*.

NOTE 17.

*Songs of the orange bower, the Moorish hold,
The "Rio verde."*

"Rio verde, rio verde," the popular Spanish romance, known to the English reader in Percy's translation.

"Gentle river, gentle river,
Lo, thy streams are stain'd with gore!
Many a brave and noble captain
Floats along thy willow'd shore," &c. &c.

NOTE 18.

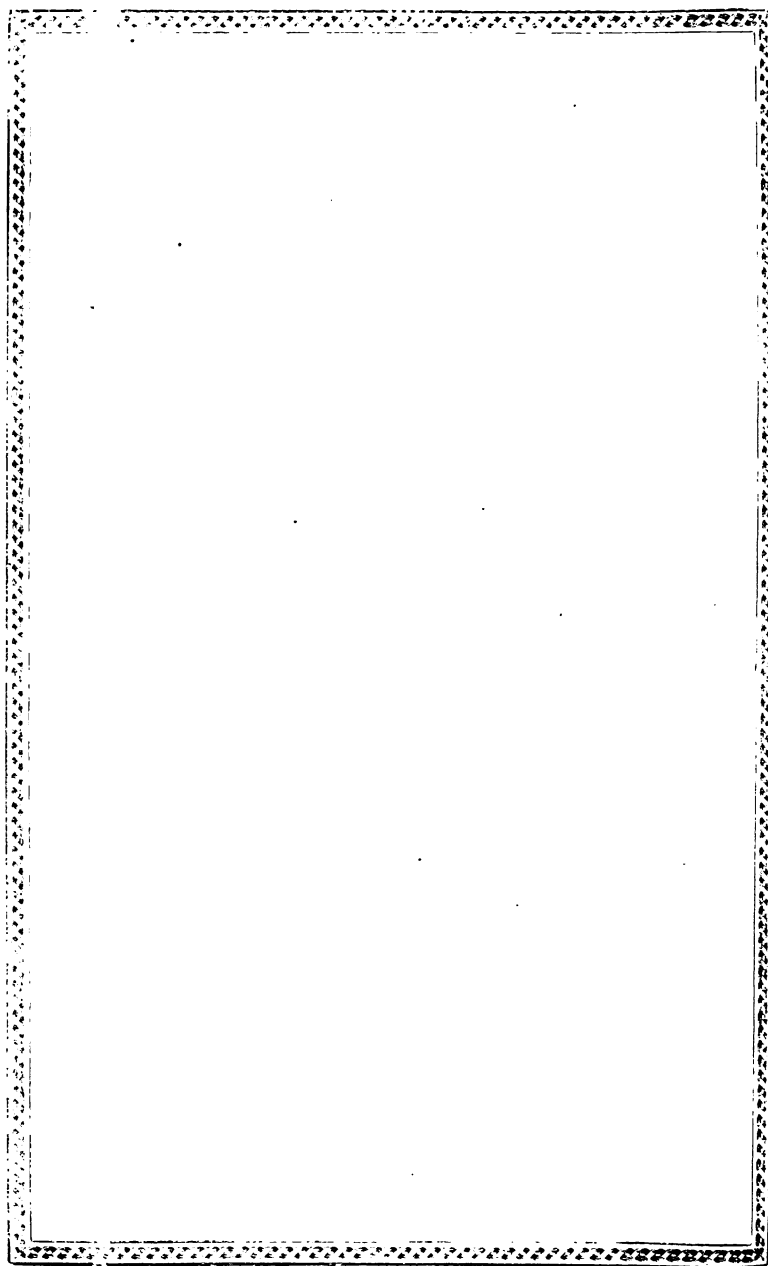
*Then the broad, lonely sunrise!—and the plash
Into the sounding waves!—*

De Humboldt, in describing the burial of a young Asturian at sea, mentions the entreaty of the officiating priest, that the body, which had been brought upon deck during the night, might not be committed to the waves until after sunrise, in order to pay it the last rites according to the usage of the Romish Church.



"The corn, in golden light,
Waves o'er the plain."

[P. 420.]



NOTE 19.

Oh! art thou not where there is no more sea?

“And there was no more sea.”—*Rev. c. xxi. v. 1.*

NOTE 20.

*And o'er the Andes' torrents borne his form,
Where our frail bridge hath quiver'd midst the storm.*

The bridges over many deep chasms amongst the Andes, are pendulous, and formed only of the fibres of equinoctial plants. Their tremulous motion has afforded a striking image to one of the stanzas in “Gertrude of Wyoming.”

“Anon some wilder portraiture he draws,
Of nature's savage glories he would speak;
The loneliness of earth, that overawes,
Where, resting by the tomb of old Cacique,
The lama-driver, on Peruvia's peak,
Nor voice nor living motion marks around,
But storks that to the boundless forest shriek,
Or wild-cane arch, high flung o'er gulf profound,
That fluctuates when the storms of El Dorado sound.”

NOTE 21.

*And then his play
Through the wide Llanos cheer'd again our way.*

Llanos, or savannahs, the great plains in South America.

NOTE 22.

*And by the mighty Oronoco stream,
On whose lone margin we have heard at morn,
From the mysterious rocks, the sunrise-music borne.*

De Humboldt speaks of these rocks on the shores of the Oronoco. Travellers have heard from time to time subterraneous sounds proceed from them at sunrise, resembling those of an organ.

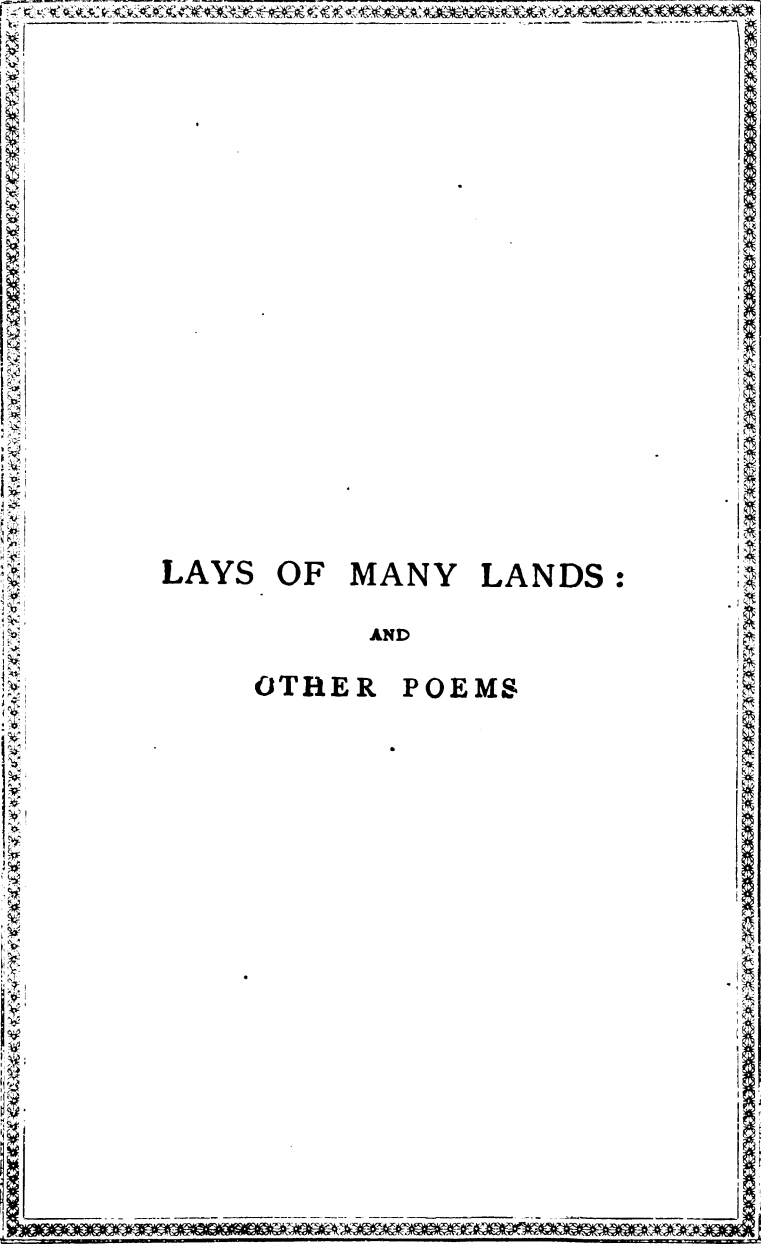
He believes in the existence of this mysterious music, although not fortunate enough to have heard it himself; and thinks that it may be produced by currents of air issuing through the crevices.

NOTE 23.

*Yet those deep southern shades oppress'd
My soul with stillness, like the calms that rest
On melancholy waves.*

The same distinguished traveller frequently alludes to the extreme stillness of the air in the equatorial regions of the new continent, and particularly on the thickly wooded shores of the Oronoco. "In this neighbourhood," he says, "no breath of wind ever agitates the foliage."





LAYS OF MANY LANDS :

AND

OTHER POEMS

THE following pieces may so far be considered a series, as each is intended to be commemorative of some national recollection, popular custom, or tradition. The idea was suggested by Herder's "Stimmen der Völker in Liedern;" the execution is, however, different, as the poems in his collection are chiefly translations.



LAYS OF MANY LANDS.



THE SWORD OF THE TOMB.

A NORTHERN LEGEND.

THE idea of this ballad is taken from a scene in "Starkoether," a tragedy by the Danish poet Oehlenschläger. The sepulchral fire here alluded to, and supposed to guard the ashes of deceased heroes, is frequently mentioned in the Northern Sagas. Severe sufferings to the departed spirit were supposed by the Scandinavian mythologists to be the consequence of any profanation of the sepulchre.—See *Oehlenschläger's Plays*.

"VOICE of the gifted elder time !
Voice of the charm and the Runic rhyme !
Speak ! from the shades and the depths disclose,
How Sigurd may vanquish his mortal foes ;
Voice of the buried past !

"Voice of the grave ! 'tis the mighty hour,
When Night with her stars and dreams hath power,
And my step hath been soundless on the snows,
And the spell I have sung hath laid repose
On the billow and the blast."

Then the torrents of the North,
And the forest pines were still,
While a hollow chant came forth
From the dark sepulchral hill.

"There shines no sun 'midst the hidden dead,
But where the day looks not the brave may tread ;
There is heard no song, and no mead is pour'd,
But the warrior may come to the silent board,
In the shadow of the night.

"There is laid a sword in thy father's tomb,
And its edge is fraught with thy foeman's doom ;
But soft be thy step through the silence deep,
And move not the urn in the house of sleep,
For the viewless have fearful might !"

Then died the solemn lay,
As a trumpet's music dies,
By the night-wind borne away
Through the wild and stormy skies.

The fir-trees rock'd to the wailing blast,
As on through the forest the warrior pass'd,—
Through the forest of Odin, the dim and old,
The dark place of visions and legends, told
By the fires of Northern pine.

The fir trees rock'd, and the frozen ground
Gave back to his footstep a hollow sound ;
And it seem'd that the depths of those awful shades,
From the dreary gloom of their long arcades,
Gave warning, with voice and sign.

But the wind strange magic knows,
To call wild shape and tone
From the grey wood's tossing boughs,
When Night is on her throne.

The pines closed o'er him with deeper gloom,
As he took the path to the monarch's tomb ;
The Pole-star shone, and the heavens were bright
With the arrowy streams of the Northern light,
But his road through dimness lay !

He pass'd, in the heart of that ancient wood,
The dark shrine stain'd with the victim's blood ;
Nor paused, till the rock where a vaulted bed
Had been hewn of old for the kingly dead,
Arose on his midnight way.

Then first a moment's chill
Went shuddering through his breast,
And the steel-clad man stood still
Before that place of rest.

But he cross'd at length, with a deep-drawn breath,
The threshold-floor of the hall of Death,
And look'd on the pale mysterious fire
Which gleam'd from the urn of his warrior-sire,
With a strange and solemn light.

Then darkly the words of the boding strain
Like an omen rose on his soul again,—
"Soft be thy step through the silence deep,
And move not the urn in the house of sleep,
For the viewless have fearful might!"

But the gleaming sword and shield
Of many a battle-day
Hung o'er that urn, reveal'd
By the tomb-fire's waveless ray.

With a faded wreath of oak-leaves bound,
They hung o'er the dust of the far-renown'd,
Whom the bright Valkyriur's warning voice
Had call'd to the banquet where gods rejoice,
And the rich mead flows in light.

With a beating heart his son drew near,
And still rang the verse in his thrilling ear,—
"Soft be thy step through the silence deep,
And move not the urn in the house of sleep,
For the viewless have fearful might!"

And many a Saga's rhyme,
And legend of the grave,
That shadowy scene and time
Call'd back, to daunt the brave.

But he raised his arm—and the flame grew dim,
And the sword in its light seem'd to wave and swim,
And his faltering hand could not grasp it well—
From the pale oak-wreath, with a clash it fell
Through the chamber of the dead!

The deep tomb rang with the heavy sound,
And the urn lay shiver'd in fragments round;

And a rush, as of tempests, quench'd the fire,
And the scatter'd dust of his warlike sire
Was strewn on the Champion's head.

One moment—and all was still
In the slumberer's ancient hall,
When the rock had ceased to thrill
With the mighty weapon's fall.

The stars were just fading, one by one,
The clouds were just tinged by the early sun,
When there stream'd through the cavern a torch's flame,
And the brother of Sigurd the valiant came
To seek him in the tomb.

Stretch'd on his shield, like the steel-girt slain,
By moonlight seen on the battle-plain,
In a speechless trance lay the warrior there,
But he wildly woke when the torch's glare
Burst on him through the gloom.

"The morning wind blows free,
And the hour of chase is near :
Come forth, come forth, with me !
What dost thou, Sigurd, here ?"

"I have put out the holy sepulchral fire,
I have scatter'd the dust of my warrior-sire !
It burns on my head, and it weighs down my heart ;
But the winds shall not wander without their part
To strew o'er the restless deep !

"In the mantle of death he was here with me now,—
There was wrath in his eye, there was gloom on his brow .
And his cold, still glance on my spirit fell
With an icy ray and a withering spell—
Oh ! chill is the house of sleep !"

"The morning wind blows free,
And the reddening sun shines clear ;
Come forth, come forth, with me !
It is dark and fearful here !"

"He is there, he is there, with his shadowy frown !
But gone from his head is the kingly crown,—
The crown from his head, and the spear from his hand,—
They have chased him far from the glorious land
Where the feast of the gods is spread !

"He must go forth alone on his phantom steed,
He must ride o'er the grave-hills with stormy speed ;
His place is no longer at Odin's board,
He is driven from Valhalla without his sword !
But the slayer shall avenge the dead !"

That sword its fame had won
By the fall of many a crest,
But its fiercest work was done
In the tomb, on Sigurd's breast !

VALKYRIUR SONG.

THE Valkyriur, or Fatal Sisters of Northern mythology, were supposed to single out the warriors who were to die in battle, and be received into the halls of Odin.

When a Northern chief fell gloriously in war, his obsequies were honoured with all possible magnificence. His arms, gold and silver, war-horse, domestic attendants, and whatever else he held most dear, were placed with him on the pile. His dependants and friends frequently made it a point of honour to die with their leader, in order to attend on his shade in Valhalla, or the Palace of Odin. And lastly, his wife was generally consumed with him on the same pile.
— See MALLETT'S *Northern Antiquities*, HERBERT'S *Helga*, &c.

— o —

Tremblingly flash'd th' inconstant meteor light,
Showing thin forms like virgins of this earth,
Save that all signs of human joy or grief,
The flush of passion, smile or tear, had seem'd
On the fix'd brightness of each dazzling cheek
Strange and unnatural.

MILMAN.

THE Sea-king woke from the troubled sleep
Of a vision-haunted night,
And he look'd from his bark o'er the gloomy deep,
And counted the streaks of light ;
For the red sun's earliest ray
Was to rouse his bands that day,
To the stormy joy of fight !

But the dreams of rest were still on earth,
And the silent stars on high,
And there waved not the smoke of one cabin hearth
'Midst the quiet of the sky ;
And along the twilight bay,
In their sleep the hamlets lay,
For they knew not the Norse were nigh !

Valkyrtur Song.

The Sea-king look'd o'er the brooding wave;
He turn'd to the dusky shore,
And there seem'd, through the arch of a tide-worn cave,
A gleam, as of snow, to pour;
And forth, in watery light,
Moved phantoms, dimly white,
Which the garb of woman bore.

Slowly they moved to the billow side;
And the forms, as they grew more clear,
Seem'd each on a tall, pale steed to ride,
And a shadowy crest to rear,
And to beckon with faint hand
From the dark and rocky strand,
And to point a gleaming spear.

Then a stillness on his spirit fell,
Before th' unearthly train,
For he knew Valhalla's daughters well,
The Choosers of the slain!
And a sudden rising breeze
Bore, across the moaning seas,
To his ear their thrilling strain.

"There are songs in Odin's Hall,
For the brave, ere night to fall!
Doth the great sun hide his ray?—
He must bring a wrathful day!
Sleeps the falchion in its sheath?—
Swords must do the work of death!
Regner!—Sea-king!—*thee* we call!—
There is joy in Odin's Hall.

"At the feast and in the song,
Thou shalt be remember'd long!
By the green isles of the flood
Thou hast left thy track in blood!
On the earth and on the sea,
There are those will speak of thee!
'Tis enough,—the war-gods call,—
There is mead in Odin's Hall!

"Regner! tell thy fair-hair'd bride
She must slumber at thy side!
Tell the brother of thy breast,
Ev'n for him thy grave hath rest!

The Cavern of the Three Tells.

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Tell the raven steed which bore thee,
When the wild wolf fled before thee,
He too with his lord must fall,—
There is room in Odin's Hall!

“Lo! the mighty sun looks forth—
Arm! thou leader of the north!
Lo! the mists of twilight fly,—
We must vanish, thou must die!
By the sword and by the spear,
By the hand that knows not fear,
Sea-king! nobly shalt thou fall!—
There is joy in Odin's Hall!”

There was arming heard on land and wave,
When afar the sunlight spread,
And the phantom forms of the tide-worn cave
With the mists of morning fled.
But at eve, the kingly hand
Of the battle-axe and brand,
Lay cold on a pile of dead!

THE CAVERN OF THE THREE TELLS.

SWISS TRADITION.

THE three founders of the Helvetic Confederacy are thought to sleep in a cavern near the Lake of Lucerne. The herdsmen call them the Three Tells: and say that they lie there, in their antique garb, in quiet slumber; and when Switzerland is in her utmost need, they will awaken and regain the liberties of the land.—See *Quarterly Review*, No. 44.

The Grütli, where the confederates held their nightly meetings, is a meadow on the shore of the Lake of Lucerne, or Lake of the Forest-cantons, here called the Forest-sea.

OH! enter not yon shadowy cave,
Seek not the bright spars there,
Though the whispering pines that o'er it wave,
With freshness fill the air:
For there the Patriot Three,
In the garb of old array'd,
By their native Forest-sea
On a rocky couch are laid.

D D

The Cavern of the Three Tells.

The Patriot Three that met of yore,
 Beneath the midnight sky,
 And leagued their hearts on the Grütli shore,
 In the name of liberty !
 Now silently they sleep
 Amidst the hills they freed ;
 But their rest is only deep,
 Till their country's hour of need.

They start not at the hunter's call,
 Nor the Lammer-geyer's cry,
 Nor the rush of a sudden torrent's fall,
 Nor the Lauwine thundering by !
 And the Alpine herdsman's lay,
 To a Switzer's heart so dear !
 On the wild wind floats away,
 No more for them to hear.

But when the battle-horn is blown
 Till the Schreckhorn's peaks reply,
 When the Jungfrau's cliffs send back the tone
 Through their eagles' lonely sky ;
 When spear-heads light the lakes,
 When trumpets loose the snows,
 When the rushing war-steed shakes
 The glacier's mute repose ;

When Uri's beechen woods wave red
 In the burning hamlet's light ;—
 Then from the cavern of the dead,
 Shall the sleepers wake in might !
 With a leap, like Tell's proud leap,
 When away the helm he flung,
 And boldly up the steep
 From the flashing billow sprung !

They shall wake beside their Forest-sea,
 In the ancient garb they wore
 When they link'd the hands that made us free,
 On the Grütli's moonlight shore :
 And their voices shall be heard,
 And be answer'd with a shout,
 Till the echoing Alps are stirr'd,
 And the signal-fires blaze out.

* The point of rock on which Tell leaped from the boat of Gessler is marked by a chapel, and called the *Tellensprung*.

And the land shall see such deeds again
 As those of that proud day,
 When Winkelried, on Sempach's plain,
 Through the serried spears made way;
 And when the rocks came down
 On the dark Morgarten dell,
 And the crowned casques,* o'erthrown,
 Before our fathers fell!

For the Kühreihen's† notes must never sound
 In a land that wears the chain,
 And the vines on freedom's holy ground
 Untrampled must remain!
 And the yellow harvests wave
 For no stranger's hand to reap;
 While within their silent cave
 The men of Grütli sleep!

SWISS SONG,

ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF AN ANCIENT BATTLE.

THE Swiss, even to our days, have continued to celebrate the anniversaries of their ancient battles with much solemnity: assembling in the open air on the fields where their ancestors fought, to hear thanksgivings offered up by the priests, and the names of all who shared in the glory of the day enumerated. They afterwards walk in procession to chapels, always erected in the vicinity of such scenes, where masses are sung for the souls of the departed.—See PLANTA'S *History of the Helvetic Confederacy*.

LOOK on the white Alps round!
 If yet they gird a land
 Where freedom's voice and step are found,
 Forget ye not the band,
 The faithful band, our sires, who fell
 Here, in the narrow battle dell!

If yet, the wilds among,
 Our silent hearts may burn,
 When the deep mountain-horn hath rung,
 And home our steps may turn,—
 Home!—home!—if still that name be dear,
 Praise to the men who perish'd here!

* *Crowned Helmets*, as a distinction of rank, are mentioned in Simond's "Switzerland."

† The Kühreihen, the celebrated *Ranz des Vaches*.

Swiss Song

Look on the white Alps round !
Up to their shining snows
That day the stormy rolling sound,
The sound of battle, rose !
Their caves prolong'd the trumpet's blast,
Their dark pines trembled as it pass'd !

They saw the princely crest,
They saw the knightly spear,
The banner and the mail-clad breast,
Borne down, and trampled here !
They saw—and glorying there they stand,
Eternal records to the land !

Praise to the mountain-born,
The brethren of the glen !
By them no steel array was worn,
They stood as peasant-men !
They left the vineyard and the field
To break an empire's lance and shield !

Look on the white Alps round !
If yet, along their steepes,
Our children's fearless feet may bound,
Free as the chamois leaps :
Teach them in song to bless the band
Amidst whose mossy graves we stand !

If, by the wood-fire's blaze,
When winter stars gleam cold,
The glorious tales of elder days
May proudly yet be told,
Forget not then the shepherd race,
Who made the hearth a holy place !

Look on the white Alps round !
If yet the Sabbath-bell
Comes o'er them with a gladdening sound,
Think on the battle dell !
For blood first bathed its flowery sod,
That chainless hearts might worship God !

THE MESSENGER BIRD.

SOME of the native Brazilians pay great veneration to a certain bird that tings mournfully in the night-time. They say it is a messenger which their deceased friends and relations have sent, and that it brings them news from the other world.—See PICART'S *Cerémonies and Religious Customs*.

THOU art come from the spirits' land, thou bird !
Thou art come from the spirits' land !
Through the dark pine grove let thy voice be heard,
And tell of the shadowy band !

We know that the bowers are green and fair
In the light of that summer shore,
And we know that the friends we have lost are there,
They are there—and they weep no more !

And we know they have quenched their fever's thirst
From the Fountain of Youth ere now,*
For there must the stream in its freshness burst,
Which none may find below !

And we know that they will not be lured to earth
From the land of deathless flowers,
By the feast, or the dance, or the song of mirth,
Though their hearts were once with ours :

Though they sat with us by the night-fire's blaze,
And bent with us the bow,
And heard the tales of our fathers' days,
Which are told to others now !

But tell us, thou bird of the solemn strain !
Can those who have loved forget ?
We call—and they answer not again—
Do they love—do they love us yet ?

* An expedition was actually undertaken by Juan Ponce de Leon, in the sixteenth century, with the view of discovering a wonderful fountain, believed by the natives of Puerto Rico to spring in one of the Lucayo Isles, and to possess the virtue of restoring youth to all who bathed in its waters.—See ROBERTSON'S *History of America*.

Doth the warrior think of his brother *there*,
 And the father of his child?
 And the chief, of those that were wont to share
 His wanderings through the wild?

We call them far through the silent night,
 And they speak not from cave or hill;
 We know, thou bird! that their land is bright,
 But say, do they love there still?

THE STRANGER IN LOUISIANA.

AN early traveller mentions a people on the banks of the Mississippi who burst into tears at the sight of a stranger. The reason of this is, that they fancy their deceased friends and relations to be only gone on a journey, and being in constant expectation of their return, look for them vainly amongst these foreign travellers."—PICART'S *Ceremonies and Religious Customs*.

"J'ai passé moi-même," says Chateaubriand, in his "*Souvenirs d'Amérique*," "chez une peuplade Indienne qui se prenait à pleurer à la vue d'un voyageur, parce qu'il lui rappelait des amis partis pour la Contrée des Ames, et depuis long-temps en voyage."

WE saw thee, O stranger, and wept!
 We look'd for the youth of the sunny glance,
 Whose step was the fleetest in chase or dance;
 The light of his eye was a joy to see,
 The path of his arrows a storm to flee!
 But there came a voice from a distant shore:
 He was call'd—he is found 'midst his tribe no more!
 He is not in his place when the night-fires burn,
 But we look for him still—he will yet return!—
 His brother sat with a drooping brow
 In the gloom of the shadowing cypress bough;
 We roused him—we bade him no longer pine,
 For we heard a step—but the step was thine.

WE saw thee, O stranger, and wept!
 We look'd for the maid of the mournful song—
 Mournful, though sweet—she hath left us long!
 We told her the youth of her love was gone,
 And she went forth to seek him—she pass'd alone;
 We hear not her voice when the woods are still,
 From the bower where it sang, like a silvery rill.
 The joy of her sire with her smile is fled,
 The winter is white on his lonely head,

He hath none by his side when the wilds we track,
He hath none when we rest—yet she comes not back !
We look'd for her eye on the feast to shine,
For her breezy step—but the step was thine !

We saw thee, O stranger, and wept !
We look'd for the chief who hath left the spear
And the bow of his battles forgotten here !
We look'd for the hunter, whose bride's lament
On the wind of the forest at eve is sent :
We look'd for the first-born, whose mother's cry
Sounds wild and shrill through the midnight sky !—
Where are they?—thou'rt seeking some distant coast—
Oh, ask of them, stranger !—send back the lost !
Tell them we mourn by the dark blue streams,
Tell them our lives but of them are dreams !
Tell, how we sat in the gloom to pine,
And to watch for a step—but the step was thine !

THE ISLE OF FOUNTS.

AN INDIAN TRADITION.

"THE River St. Mary has its source from a vast lake or marsh, which lies between Flint and Oakmulge rivers, and occupies a space of near three hundred miles in circuit. This vast accumulation of waters, in the wet season, appears as a lake, and contains some large islands or knolls of rich high land ; one of which the present generation of the Creek Indians represent to be a most blissful spot of earth : they say it is inhabited by a peculiar race of Indians, whose women are incomparably beautiful. They also tell you that this terrestrial paradise has been seen by some of their enterprising hunters, when in pursuit of game ; but that in their endeavours to approach it, they were involved in perpetual labyrinths, and, like enchanted land, still as they imagined they had just gained it, it seemed to fly before them, alternately appearing and disappearing. They resolved, at length, to leave the delusive pursuit, and to return, which, after a number of difficulties, they effected. When they reported their adventures to their countrymen, the young warriors were inflamed with an irresistible desire to invade, and make a conquest of, so charming a country ; but all their attempts have hitherto proved abortive, never having been able again to find that enchanting spot."—*BARTRAM'S Travels through North and South Carolina.*

The additional circumstances in the " Isle of Founts " are merely imaginary.

SON of the stranger ! wouldst thou take
O'er yon blue hills thy lonely way,
To reach the still and shining lake
Along whose banks the west winds play ?—
Let no vain dreams thy heart beguile,
Oh ! seek thou not the Fountain Isle !

The Isle of Founts.

Lull but the mighty Serpent King,*
 'Midst the grey rocks, his old domain ;
 Ward but the cougar's deadly spring,—
 Thy step that lake's green shore may gain,
 And the bright Isle, when all is pass'd,
 Shall vainly meet thine eye at last !

Yes ! there, with all its rainbow streams,
 Clear as within thine arrow's flight,
 The Isle of Founts, the Isle of dreams,
 Floats on the wave in golden light ;
 And lovely will the shadows be
 Of groves whose fruit is not for thee !

And breathings from their sunny flowers,
 Which are not of the things that die,
 And singing voices from their bowers,
 Shall greet thee in the purple sky ;
 Soft voices, e'en like those that dwell
 Far in the green reed's hollow cell.

Or hast thou heard the sounds that rise
 From the deep chambers of the earth ?
 The wild and wondrous melodies
 To which the ancient rocks gave birth †
 Like that sweet song of hidden caves
 Shall swell those wood-notes o'er the waves.

The emerald waves !—they take their hue
 And image from that sunbright shore ;
 But wouldst thou launch thy light canoe,
 And wouldst thou ply thy rapid oar,
 Before thee, hadst thou morning's speed,
 The dreamy land should still recede !

Yet on the breeze thou still wouldst hear
 The music of its flowing shades,
 And ever should the sound be near
 Of founts that ripple through its glades ;

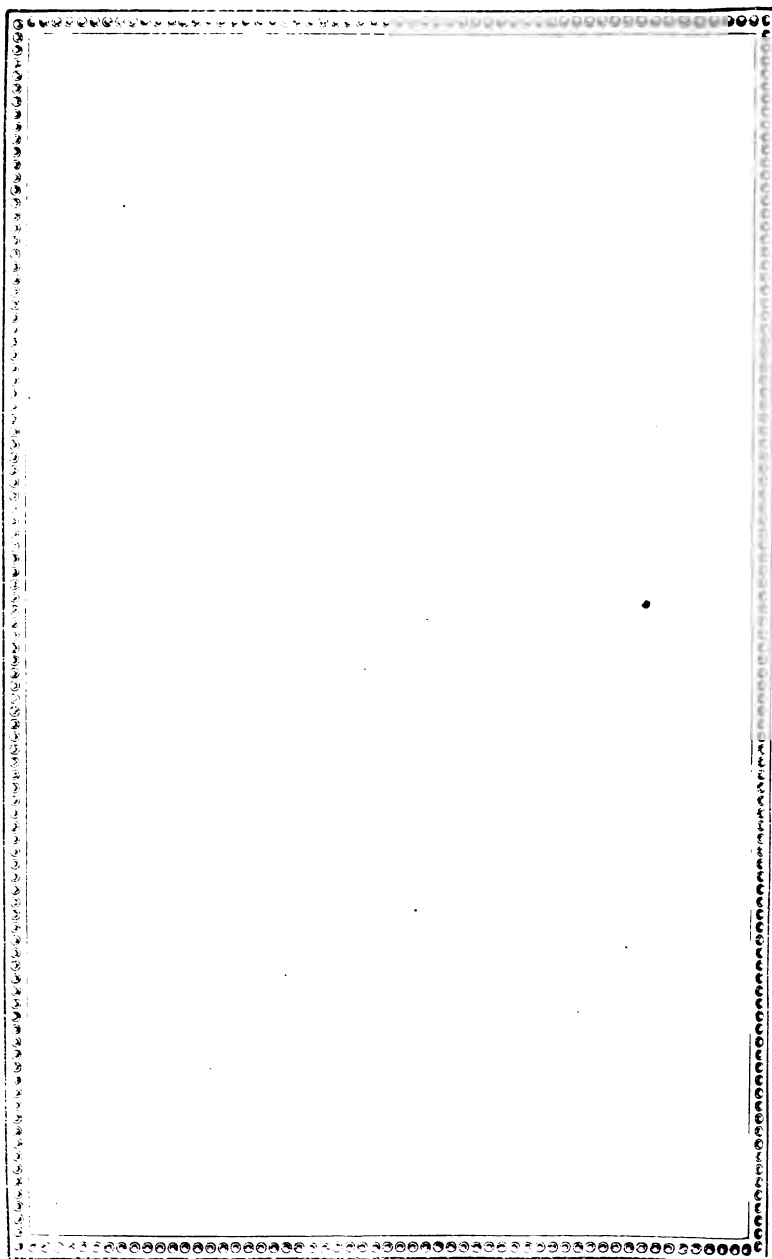
* The Cherokees believe that the recesses of their mountains, overgrown with lofty pines and cedars, and covered with old mossy rocks, are inhabited by the kings or chiefs of the rattlesnakes, whom they denominate the "bright old inhabitants." They represent them as snakes of an enormous size, and which possess the power of drawing to them every living creature that comes within the reach of their eyes. Their heads are said to be crowned with a carbuncle of dazzling brightness.—See *Notes to Leyden's "Scenes of Infancy."*

† The stones on the banks of the Oronoco, called by the South American missionaries *Lajas de Musica*, are alluded to in a former note.



"She stood upon the loftiest peak."

[p. 429.]



The sound, and sight, and flashing ray
Of joyous waters in their play !

But woe for him who sees them burst
With their bright spray-showers to the lake !
Earth has no spring to quench the thirst
That semblance in his soul shall wake,
For ever pouring through his dreams,
The gush of those untasted streams !

Bright, bright in many a rocky urn,
The waters of our deserts lie,
Yet at their source his lip shall burn,
Parch'd with the fever's agony !
From the blue mountains to the main,
Our thousand floods may roll in vain.

E'en thus our hunters came of yore
Back from their long and weary quest ;—
Had they not seen th' untrodden shore,
And could they 'midst our wilds find rest ?
The lightning of their glance was fled,
They dwelt amongst us as the dead !

They lay beside our glittering rills,
With visions in their darken'd eye,
Their joy was not amidst the hills,
Where elk and deer before us fly ;
Their spears upon the cedar hung,
Their javelins to the wind were flung.

They bent no more the forest-bow,
They arm'd not with the warrior band,
The moons waned o'er them dim and slow—
They left us for the spirits' land !
Beneath our pines yon greensward heap
Shows where the restless found their sleep.

Son of the stranger ! if at eve
Silence be 'midst us in thy place,
Yet go not where the mighty leave
The strength of battle and of chase !
Let no vain dreams thy heart beguile,
Oh ! seek thou not the Fountain Isle !

THE BENDED BOW.

It is supposed that war was anciently proclaimed in Britain by sending messengers in different directions through the land, each bearing a *bended bow*; and that peace was in like manner announced by a bow unstrung, and therefore straight.—See *The Cambrian Antiquities*.

THERE was heard the sound of a coming foe,
There was sent through Britain a Bended Bow,
And a voice was pour'd on the free winds far,
As the land rose up at the sign of war.

“ Heard ye not the battle-horn ?—
Reaper ! leave thy golden corn !
Leave it for the birds of Heaven,
Swords must flash, and spears be riven !
Leave it for the winds to shed—
Arm ! ere Britain's turf grow red ! ”

And the reaper arm'd, like a freeman's son,
And the Bended Bow and the voice pass'd on.

“ Hunter ! leave the mountain-chase !
Take the falchion from its place !
Let the wolf go free to-day,
Leave him for a nobler prey !
Let the deer ungall'd sweep by,—
Arm thee ! Britain's foes are nigh ! ”

And the hunter arm'd ere the chase was done,
And the Bended Bow and the voice pass'd on.

“ Chieftain ! quit the joyous feast !
Stay not till the song hath ceased :
Though the mead be foaming bright,
Though the fires give ruddy light,
Leave the hearth, and leave the hall—
Arm thee ! Britain's foes must fall. ”

And the chieftain arm'd, and the horn was blown,
And the Bended Bow and the voice pass'd on.

“ Prince ! thy father's deeds are told,
In the bower and in the hold !

Where the goatherd's lay is sung,
Where the minstrel's harp is strung !—
Foes are on thy native sea—
Give our bards a tale of thee ! ”

And the prince came arm'd, like a leader's son,
And the Bended Bow and the voice pass'd on.

“ Mother ! stay thou not thy boy !
He must learn the battle's joy.
Sister ! bring the sword and spear,
Give thy brother words of cheer !
Maiden ! bid thy lover part,
Britain calls the strong in heart ! ”

And the Bended Bow and the voice pass'd on,
And the bards made song for a battle won.

HE NEVER SMILED AGAIN.

It is recorded of Henry I., that after the death of his son, Prince William, who perished in a shipwreck off the coast of Normandy, he was never seen to smile.

THE bark that held a prince went down,
The sweeping waves roll'd on ;
And what was England's glorious crown
To him that wept a son ?
He lived—for life may long be borne
Ere sorrow break its chain ;—
Why comes not death to those who mourn ?—
He never smiled again !

There stood proud forms around his throne,
The stately and the brave,
But which could fill the place of one,
That one beneath the wave ?
Before him pass'd the young and fair,
In pleasure's reckless train,
But seas dash'd o'er his son's bright hair—
He never smiled again !

He sat where festal bowls went round ;
He heard the minstrel sing,
He saw the Tourney's victor crown'd,
Amidst the knightly ring :

A murmur of the restless deep
 Was blent with every strain,
 A voice of winds that would not sleep—
 He never smiled again !

Hearts, in that time, closed o'er the trace
 Of vows once fondly pour'd,
 And strangers took the kinsman's place
 At many a joyous board ;
 Graves, which true love had bathed with tears,
 Were left to Heaven's bright rain,
 Fresh hopes were born for other years—
 He never smiled again !

CŒUR DE LION AT THE BIER OF HIS FATHER.

THE body of Henry II. lay in state in the abbey-church of Fontevraud, where it was visited by Richard Cœur de Lion, who, on beholding it, was struck with horror and remorse, and bitterly reproached himself for that rebellious conduct which had been the means of bringing his father to an untimely grave.

TORCHES were blazing clear,
 Hymns pealing deep and slow,
 Where a king lay stately on his bier,
 In the church of Fontevraud.
 Banners of battle o'er him hung,
 And warriors slept beneath,
 And light, as Noon's broad light, was flung
 On the settled face of death.

On the settled face of death
 A strong and ruddy glare,
 Though dimm'd at times by the censer's breath,
 Yet it fell still brightest there :
 As if each deeply-furrow'd trace
 Of earthly years to show,—
 Alas ! that sceptred mortal's race
 Had surely closed in woe !

The marble floor was swept
 By many a long dark stole,
 As the kneeling priests round him that slept,
 Sang mass for the parted soul ;

And solemn were the strains they pour'd
Through the stillness of the night,
With the cross above, and the crown and sword,
And the silent king in sight.

There was heard a heavy clang,
As of steel-girt men the tread,
And the tombs and the hollow pavement rang
With a sounding thrill of dread ;
And the holy chant was hush'd awhile,
As by the torch's flame,
A gleam of arms, up the sweeping aisle,
With a mail-clad leader came.

He came with haughty look,
An eagle glance and clear,
But his proud heart through its breast-plate shook,
When he stood beside the bier !
He stood there still with a drooping brow,
And clasp'd hands o'er it raised ;—
For his father lay before him low,
It was Cœur-de-Lion gazed !

And silently he strove
With the workings of his breast,—
But there's more in late repentant love
Than steel may keep suppress'd !
And his tears brake forth, at last, like rain—
Men held their breath in awe,
For his face was seen by his warrior-train,
And he reck'd not that they saw.

He look'd upon the dead,
And sorrow seem'd to lie,
A weight of sorrow, ev'n like lead,
Pale on the fast-shut eye.
He stoop'd—and kiss'd the frozen cheek,
And the heavy hand of clay,
Till bursting words—yet all too weak—
Gave his soul's passion way.

“ Oh, father ! is it vain,
This late remorse and deep ?
Speak to me, father ! once again,
I weep—behold, I weep !

Alas ! my guilty pride and ire !
 Were but this work undone,
 I would give England's crown, my sire ?
 To hear thee bless thy son.

" Speak to me ! mighty grief
 Ere now the dust hath stirr'd !
 Hear me, but hear me !—father, chief,
 My king ! I *must* be heard !—
 Hush'd, hush'd—how is it that I call,
 And that thou answerest not ?
 When was it thus ?—woe, woe for all
 The love my soul forgot !

" Thy silver hairs I see,
 So still, so sadly bright !
 And, father, father ! but for me,
 They had not been so white !
 Above thee down, high heart ! at last,
 No longer couldst thou strive ;—
 Oh ! for one moment of the past,
 To kneel and say—' forgive !'

" Thou wert the noblest king,
 On royal throne e'er seen ;
 And thou didst wear, in knightly ring,
 Of all, the stateliest mien ;
 And thou didst prove, where spears are proved
 In war, the bravest heart—
 Oh ! ever the renown'd and loved
 Thou wert—and *there* thou art !

" Thou that my boyhood's guide
 Didst take fond joy to be !—
 The times I've sported at thy side,
 And climb'd thy parent-knee !
 And there before the blessed shrine,
 My sire ! I see thee lie,—
 How will that sad still face of thine
 Look on me till I die !"

THE VASSAL'S LAMENT FOR THE FALLEN TREE.

"HERE (at Brereton, in Cheshire) is one thing incredibly strange; but attested, as I myself have heard, by many persons, and commonly believed. Before any heir of this family dies, there are seen, in a lake adjoining, the bodies of trees swimming on the water for several days."—CAMDEN'S *Britannia*.

YES ! I have seen the ancient oak,
On the dark, deep water cast,
And it was not fell'd by the woodman's stroke,
Or the rush of the sweeping blast ;
For the axe might never touch that tree,
And the air was still as a summer sea.

I saw it fall, as falls a chief
By an arrow in the fight,
And the old woods shook, to their loftiest leaf,
At the crashing of its might !
And the startled deer to their coverts drew,
And the spray of the lake as a fountain's flew !

'Tis fall'n ! but think thou not I weep
For the forest's pride o'erthrown ;
An old man's tears lie far too deep,
To be pour'd for this alone !
But by that sign too well I know,
That a youthful head must soon be low !

A youthful head, with its shining hair,
And its bright, quick-flashing eye—
Well may I weep ! for the boy is fair,
Too fair a thing to die !
But on his brow the mark is set—
Oh ! could *my* life redeem him yet !

He bounded by me as I gazed
Alone on the fatal sign,
And it seem'd like sunshine when he raised
His joyous glance to mine !
With a stag's fleet step he bounded by,
So full of life—but he must die !

418 *The Vassal's Lament for the Fallen Tree.*

He must, he must ! in that deep dell,
By that dark water's side,
'Tis known that ne'er a proud tree fell,
But an heir of his fathers died.
And he—there's laughter in his eye,
Joy in his voice—yet he must die !

I've borne him in these arms, that now
Are nerveless and unstrung ;
And must I see, on that fair brow,
The dust untimely flung ?
I must !—yon green oak, branch and crest,
Lies floating on the dark lake's breast !

The noble boy !—how proudly sprung
The falcon from his hand !
It seem'd like youth to see *him* young,
A flower in his father's land !
But the hour of the knell and the dirge is nigh,
For the tree hath fall'n, and the flower must die.

Say not 'tis vain !—I tell thee, some
Are warn'd by a meteor's light,
Or a pale bird, flitting, calls them home,
Or a voice on the winds by night ;
And they must go !—and he too, he—
Woe for the fall of the glorious Tree !

THE WILD HUNTSMAN.

It is a popular belief in the Odenwald, that the passing of the Wild Huntsman announces the approach of war. He is supposed to issue with his train from the ruined castle of Rodenstein, and traverse the air to the opposite castle of Schnellerts. It is confidently asserted that the sound of his phantom horses and hounds was heard by the Duke of Baden before the commencement of the last war in Germany.

THY rest was deep at the slumberer's hour,
If thou didst not hear the blast
Of the savage horn, from the mountain tower,
As the Wild Night-Huntsman pass'd,
And the roar of the stormy chase went by,
Through the dark unquiet sky !

The stag sprang up from his mossy bed
When he caught the piercing sounds,
And the oak-boughs crash'd to his antler'd head,
As he flew from the viewless hounds ;
And the falcon soar'd from her craggy height,
Away through the rushing night !

The banner shook on its ancient hold,
And the pine in its desert place,
As the cloud and tempest onward roll'd
With the din of the trampling race ;
And the glens were fill'd with the laugh and shout,
And the bugle, ringing out !

From the chieftain's hand the wine-cup fell,
At the castle's festive board,
And a sudden pause came o'er the swell
Of the harp's triumphal chord ;
And the Minnesinger's* thrilling lay
In the hall died fast away.

The convent's chanted right was stay'd,
And the hermit dropp'd his beads,
And a trembling ran through the forest-shade,
At the neigh of the phantom steeds,
And the church-bells peal'd to the rocking blast
As the Wild Night-Huntsman pass'd.

The storm hath swept with the chase away,
There is stillness in the sky,
But the mother looks on her son to-day,
With a troubled heart and eye,
And the maiden's brow hath a shade of care
Midst the gleam of her golden hair !

The Rhine flows bright, but its waves ere long
Must hear a voice of war,
And a clash of spears our hills among,
And a trumpet from afar ;
And the brave on a bloody turf must lie,
For the Huntsman hath gone by !

* Minnesinger, *love-singer*,—the wandering minstrels of Germany were so called in the middle ages.

BRANDENBURGH HARVEST-SONG.*

FROM THE GERMAN OF LA MOTTE FOUQUÉ.

THE corn, in golden light,
Waves o'er the plain ;
The sickle's gleam is bright ,
Full swells the grain.

Now send we far around
Our harvest lay !—
Alas ! a heavier sound
Comes o'er the day !

On every breeze a knell
The hamlets pour,—
We know its cause too well,
She is no more !

Earth shrouds with burial sod
Her soft eye's blue,—
Now o'er the gifts of God
Fall tears like dew !

THE SHADE OF THESEUS.

ANCIENT GREEK TRADITION.

KNOW ye not when our dead
From sleep to battle sprang !—
When the Persian charger's tread
On their covering greensward rang !
When the trampling march of foes
Had crush'd our vines and flowers,
When jewell'd crests arose
Through the holy laurel bowers ;

* For the year of the Queen of Prussia's death.

When banners caught the breeze,
When helms in sunlight shone,
When masts were on the seas,
And spears on Marathon.

There was one, a leader crown'd,
And arm'd for Greece that day ;
But the falchions made no sound
On his gleaming war-array.
In the battle's front he stood,
With his tall and shadowy crest :
But the arrows drew no blood
Though their path was through his breast.

When banners caught the breeze,
When helms in sunlight shone,
When masts were on the seas,
And spears on Marathon.

His sword was seen to flash
Where the boldest deeds were done ;
But it smote without a clash ;
The stroke was heard by none !
His voice was not of those
That swell'd the rolling blast,
And his steps fell hush'd like snows—
'Twas the Shade of Theseus pass'd !

When banners caught the breeze,
When helms in sunlight shone,
When masts were on the seas,
And spears on Marathon.

Far sweeping through the foe,
With a fiery charge he bore ;
And the Mede left many a bow
On the sounding ocean-shore.
And the foaming waves grew red,
And the sails were crowded fast,
When the sons of Asia fled,
As the Shade of Theseus pass'd !

When banners caught the breeze,
When helms in sunlight shone,
When masts were on the seas,
And spears on Marathon.

GREEK FUNERAL CHANT, OR MYRIOLOGUE.

“LES Chants Funèbres par lesquels on déplore en Grèce la mort de ses proches, prennent le nom particulier de *Myriologia*, comme qui dirait, Discours de lamentation, complaintes. Un malade vient-il de rendre le dernier soupir, sa femme, sa mère, ses filles, ses sœurs, celles, en un mot, de ses plus proches parentes qui sont là, lui ferment les yeux et la bouche, en épanchant librement, chacune selon son naturel et sa mesure de tendresse pour le défunt, la douleur qu'elle ressent de sa perte. Ce premier devoir rempli, elles se retirent toutes chez une de leurs parentes ou de leurs amies. Là elles changent de vêtements, s'habillent de blanc, comme pour la cérémonie nuptiale, avec cette différence, qu'elles gardent la tête nue, les cheveux épars et pendans. Ces apprêts terminés, les parentes reviennent dans leur parure de deuil ; toutes se rangent en cercle autour du mort, et leur douleur s'exhale de nouveau, et, comme la première fois, sans règle et sans contrainte. A ces plaintes spontanées succèdent bientôt des lamentations d'une autre espèce : ce sont les *Myriologues*. Ordinairement c'est la plus proche parente qui prononce le sien la première ; après elle les autres parentes, les amies, les simples voisins. Les *Myriologues* sont toujours composés et chantés par les femmes. Ils sont toujours improvisés, toujours en vers, et toujours chantés sur un air qui diffère d'un lieu à un autre, mais qui, dans un lieu donné, reste invariablement consacré à ce genre de poésie.”—*Chants Populaires de la Grèce Moderne*, par C. FAURIEL.

A WAIL was heard around the bed, the death-bed of the young,
Amidst her tears the Funeral Chant a mournful mother sung,—
“Ianthis ! dost thou sleep ?—Thou sleep'st !—but this is not the
rest,

The breathing and the rosy calm, I have pillow'd on my breast !
I lull'd thee not to *this* repose, Ianthis ! my sweet son !
As in thy glowing childhood's time by twilight I have done !—
How is it that I bear to stand and look upon thee now ?
And that I die not, seeing death on thy pale glorious brow ?

“I look upon thee, thou that wert of all most fair and brave !
I see thee wearing still too much of beauty for the grave !
Though mournfully thy smile is fix'd, and heavily thine eye
Hath shut above the falcon-glance that in it loved to lie ;
And fast is bound the springing step, that seem'd on breezes borne,
When to thy couch I came and said,—‘Wake, hunter, wake ! ’tis
morn !’

Yet art thou lovely still, my flower ! untouch'd by slow decay,—
And I, the wither'd stem, remain—I would that grief might slay !

‘Oh ! ever when I met thy look, I knew that *this* would be !
I knew too well that length of days was not a gift for thee !
I saw it in thy kindling cheek, and in thy bearing high ;—
A voice came whispering to my soul, and told me thou must die !

That thou must die, my fearless one ! where swords were flashing
red.—

Why doth a mother live to say—My first-born and my dead ?
They tell me of thy youthful fame, they talk of victory won—
Speak *thou*, and I will hear ! my child, Ianthis ! my sweet son ! ”

A wail was heard around the bed, the death-bed of the young,
A fair-hair'd bride the Funeral Chant amidst her weeping sung.—
“ Ianthis ! look'st thou not on *me* ?— Can love indeed be fled ?
When was it woe before to gaze upon thy stately head ?
I would that I had follow'd thee, Ianthis, my beloved !
And stood as woman oft hath stood where faithful hearts are proved !
That I had bound a breastplate on, and battled at thy side—
It would have been a blessed thing together had we died !

“ But where was I when thou didst fall beneath the fatal sword ?
Was I beside the sparkling fount, or at the peaceful board ?
Or singing some sweet song of old, in the shadow of the vine,
Or praying to the saints for thee, before the holy shrine ?
And thou wert lying low the while, the life-drops from thy heart
Fast gushing like a mountain-spring !—and couldst thou thus depart ?
Couldst thou depart, nor on my lips pour out thy fleeting breath ?—
Oh ! I was with thee but in joy, that should have been in death !

“ Yes ! I was with thee when the dance through mazy rings was
led,
And when the lyre and voice were tuned, and when the feast was
spread !
But not where noble blood flow'd forth, where sounding javelins
flew—
Why did I hear love's first sweet words, and not its last adieu ?
What now can breathe of gladness more, what scene, what hour,
what tone ?
The blue skies fade with all their lights, they fade, since thou art
gone !
Ev'n *that* must leave me, that still face, by all my tears unmoved—
Take me from this dark world with thee, Ianthis ! my beloved ! ”

A wail was heard around the bed, the death-bed of the young,
Amidst her tears the Funeral Chant a mournful sister sung.
“ Ianthis ! brother of my soul !—oh ! where are now the days
That laugh'd among the deep green hills, on all our infant plays ?
When we two sported by the streams, or track'd them to their source,
And like a stag's, the rocks along, was thy fleet, fearless course !—
I see the pines there waving yet, I see the rills descend,
I see thy bounding step no more—my brother and my friend !

"I come with flowers—for Spring is come!—Ianthis! art thou *here*?
 I bring the garlands she hath brought, I cast them on thy bier!
 Thou shouldst be crown'd with victory's crown—but oh! more meet
they seem,

The first faint violets of the wood, and lilies of the stream!
 More meet for one so fondly loved, and laid thus early low—
 Alas! how sadly sleeps thy face amidst the sunshine's glow:
 The golden glow that through thy heart was wont such joy to send,—
 Woe! that it smiles, and not for thee!—my brother and my friend!"

ANCIENT GREEK SONG OF EXILE.

WHERE is the summer, with her golden sun?—
 That festal glory hath not pass'd from earth:
 For me alone the laughing day is done!
 Where is the summer with her voice of mirth?—
 Far in my own bright land!

Where are the Fauns, whose flute-notes breathe and die
 On the green hills?—the founts, from sparry caves
 Through the wild places bearing melody?
 The reeds, low whispering o'er the river waves?—
 Far in my own bright land!

Where are the temples, through the dim wood shining,
 The virgin-dances, and the choral strains?
 Where the sweet sisters of my youth, entwining
 The spring's first roses for their sylvan fanes?—
 Far in my own bright land!

Where are the vineyards, with their joyous throngs,
 The red grapes pressing when the foliage fades?
 The lyres, the wreaths, the lovely Dorian songs,
 And the pine forests, and the olive shades?—
 Far in my own bright land!

Where the deep haunted grots, the laurel bowers,
 The Dryad's footsteps, and the minstrel's dreams?
 Oh! that my life were as a southern flower's!
 I might not languish then by these chill streams,
 Far from my own bright land!

THE PARTING SONG.

THIS piece is founded on a tale related by Fauriel, in his "Chansons Populaires de la Grèce Moderne," and accompanied by some very interesting particulars respecting the extempore parting songs, or songs of expatriation, as he informs us they are called, in which the modern Greeks are accustomed to pour forth their feelings on bidding farewell to their country and friends.

A YOUTH went forth to exile, from a home
Such as to early thought gives images,
The longest treasured, and most oft recall'd,
And brightest kept, of love ;—a mountain home,
That, with the murmur of its rocking pines
And sounding waters, first in childhood's heart
Wakes the deep sense of nature unto joy,
And half unconscious prayer ;—a Grecian home,
With the transparence of blue skies o'erhung,
And, through the dimness of its olive shades,
Catching the flash of fountains, and the gleam
Of shining pillars from the fanes of old.

And this was what he left !—Yet many leave
Far more :—the glistening eye, that first from theirs
Call'd out the soul's bright smile ; the gentle hand,
Which through the sunshine led forth infant steps
To where the violets lay ; the tender voice
That earliest taught them what deep melody
Lives in affection's tones.—*He* left not these.
Happy the weeper, that but weeps to part
With all a mother's love !—A bitterer grief
Was his—To part *unloved* !—of her unloved,
That should have breathed upon his heart, like spring
Fostering its young faint flowers !

Yet had he friends,
And they went forth to cheer him on his way
Unto the parting spot ;—and she too went,
That mother, tearless for her youngest-born.
The parting spot was reach'd :—a lone deep glen,
Holy, perchance, of yore, for cave and fount
Were there, and sweet-voiced echoes ; and above,
The silence of the blue, still, upper Heaven
Hung round the crags of Pindus, where they wore
Their crowning snows.—Upon a rock he sprung,

The unbeloved one, for his home to gaze
Through the wild laurels back ; but then a light
Broke on the stern, proud sadness of his eye,
A sudden quivering light, and from his lips
A burst of passionate song.

“Farewell, farewell !

“I hear thee, O thou rushing stream !—thou’rt from my native dell,
Thou’rt bearing thence a mournful sound—a murmur of farewell !
And fare *thee* well—flow on, my stream !—flow on, thou bright and
free !

I do but dream that in thy voice one tone laments for me ;
But I have been a thing unloved, from childhood’s loving years,
And therefore turns my soul to thee, for thou hast known my tears ;
The mountains, and the caves, and thou, my secret tears have
known :

The woods can tell where *he* hath wept, that ever wept alone !

“I see thee once again, my home ! thou’rt there amidst thy vines,
And clear upon thy gleaming roof the light of summer shines.
It is a joyous hour when eve comes whispering through thy groves,
The hour that brings the son from toil, the hour the mother
loves !—

The hour *the mother* loves !—for *me* beloved it hath not been ;
Yet ever in its purple smile, *thou* smil’st, a blessed scene !
Whose quiet beauty o’er my soul through distant years will come—
Yet what but as the dead, to thee, shall I be then, my home ?

“Not as the dead !—no, not the dead !—We speak of *them*—we
keep

Their names, like light that must not fade, within our bosoms
deep !

We hallow ev’n the lyre they touch’d, we love the lay they sung,
We pass with softer step the place *they* fill’d our band among !
But I depart like sound, like dew, like aught that leaves on earth
No trace of sorrow or delight, no memory of its birth !
I go !—the echo of the rock a thousand songs may swell
When mine is a forgotten voice.—Woods, mountains, home, fare-
well !

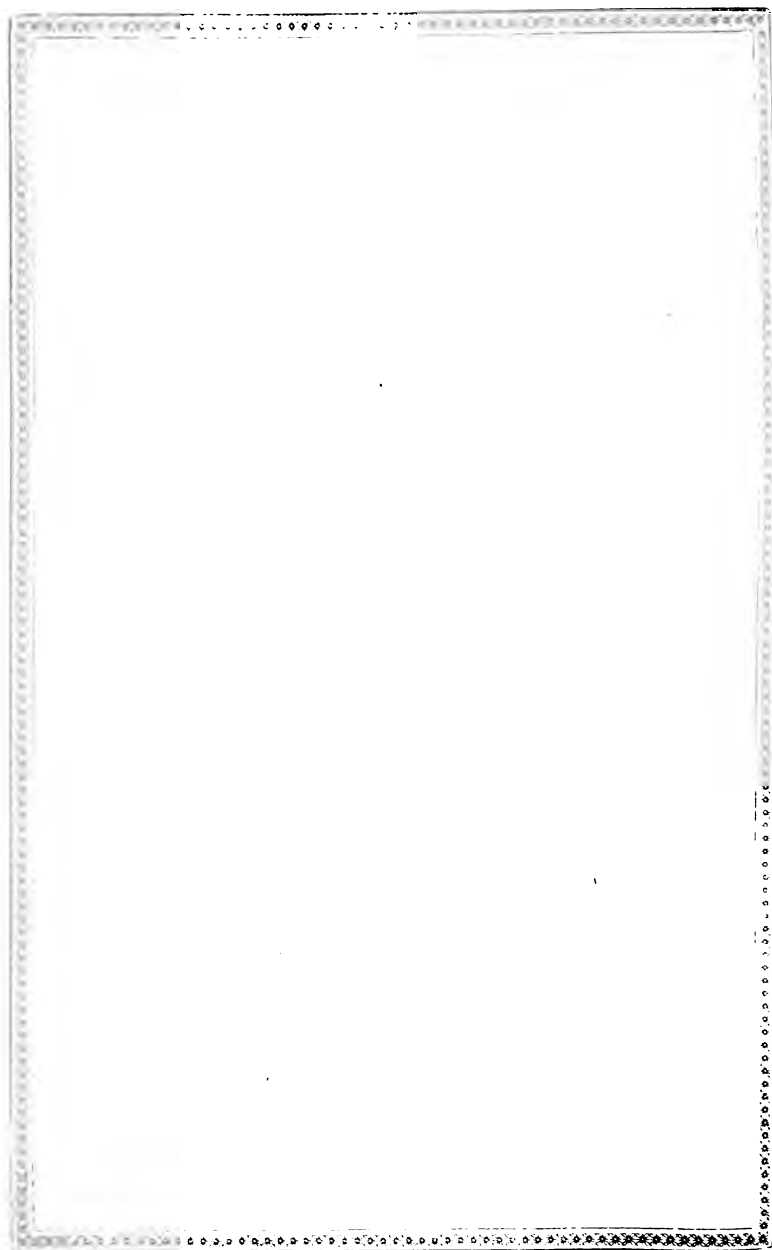
“And farewell, mother !—I have borne in lonely silence long,
But now the current of my soul grows passionate and strong !
And I will speak ! though but the wind that wanders through the
sky,

And but the dark, deep-rustling pines and rolling streams reply.
Yes ! I will speak !—within my breast whate’er hath seem’d to be,
There lay a hidden fount of love, that would have gush’d for thee !



"Rest, pilgrim, rest !—thou'rt from the Syrian land."

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Brightly it would have gush'd, but thou, my mother! thou hast
thrown
Back on the forests and the wilds what should have been thine
own!

"Then fare thee well! I leave thee not in loneliness to pine,
Since thou hast sons of statelier mien, and fairer brow than mine!
Forgive me that thou couldst not love!—it may be, that a tone
Yet from my burning heart may pierce through thine, when I am
gone!

And thou, perchance, mayst weep for him on whom thou ne'er hast
smiled,

And the grave give his birthright back to thy neglected child!
Might but my spirit *then* return, and 'midst its kindred dwell,
And quench its thirst with love's free tears!—'Tis all a dream—
farewell!"

"Farewell!"—the echo died with that deep word,
Yet died not so the late repentant pang
By the strain quicken'd in the mother's breast!
There had pass'd many changes o'er her brow,
And cheek, and eye; but into one bright flood
Of tears at last all melted; and she fell
On the glad bosom of her child, and cried,
"Return, return, my son!"—The echo caught
A lovelier sound than song, and woke again,
Murmuring—"Return, my son!"——

THE SULIOTE MOTHER.

It is related, in a French Life of Ali Pacha, that several of the Suliote women, on the advance of the Turkish troops into their mountain fastnesses, assembled on a lofty summit, and, after chanting a wild song, precipitated themselves, with their children, into the chasm below, to avoid becoming the slaves of the enemy.

SHE stood upon the loftiest peak,
Amidst the clear blue sky,
A bitter smile was on her cheek,
And a dark flash in her eye.

"Dost thou see them, boy?—through the dusky pines
Dost thou see where the foeman's armour shines?"

Hast thou caught the gleam of the conqueror's crest?
My babe, that I cradled on my breast,
Wouldst thou spring from thy mother's arms with joy?—
That sight hath cost thee a father, boy!"

For in the rocky strait beneath,
Lay Suliote sire and son;
They had heap'd high the piles of death
Before the pass was won.

"They have cross'd the torrent, and on they come!
Woe for the mountain hearth and home!
There, where the hunter laid by his spear,
There, where the lyre hath been sweet to hear,
There, where I sang thee, fair babe! to sleep,
Nought but the blood-stain our trace shall keep!"

And now the horn's loud blast was heard,
And now the cymbal's clang,
Till ev'n the upper air was stirr'd,
As cliff and hollow rang.

"Hark! they bring music, my joyous child!
What saith the trumpet to Suli's wild!
Doth it light thine eye with so quick a fire,
As if at a glance of thine armèd sire?—
Still!—be thou still!—there are brave men low—
Thou wouldst not smile couldst thou see him now!"

But nearer came the clash of steel,
And louder swell'd the horn,
And farther yet the tambour's peal
Through the dark pass was borne.

"Hear'st thou the sound of their savage mirth?—
Boy! thou wert free when I gave thee birth,—
Free, and how cherish'd, my warrior's son!
He too hath bless'd thee, as I have done!
Ay, and unchain'd must his loved ones be—
Freedom, young Suliote! for thee and me!"

And from the arrowy peak she sprung,
And fast the fair child bore:
A veil upon the wind was flung,
A cry—and all was o'er!



MISCELLANEOUS PIECES.

THE TREASURES OF THE DEEP.

WHAT hidest thou in thy treasure-caves and cells?
Thou hollow-sounding and mysterious main!—
Pale glistening pearls, and rainbow-colour'd shells,
Bright things which gleam unreck'd of, and in vain!—
Keep, keep thy riches, melancholy sea!
We ask not such from thee.

Yet more, the depths have more!—what wealth untold,
Far down, and shining through their stillness lies!
Thou hast the starry gems, the burning gold,
Won from ten thousand royal Argosies!—
Sweep o'er thy spoils, thou wild and wrathful main.
Earth claims not *these* again.

Yet more, the depths have more!—thy waves have roll'd
Above the cities of a world gone by!
Sand hath fill'd up the palaces of old,
Seaweed o'ergrown the halls of revelry,—
Dash o'er them, ocean! in thy scornful play!
Man yields them to decay.

Yet more! the billows and the depths have more!
High hearts and brave are gather'd to thy breast!
They hear not now the booming waters roar,
The battle-thunders will not break their rest.—
Keep thy red gold and gems, thou stormy grave!
Give back the true and brave!

Give back the lost and lovely !—those for whom
 The place was kept at board and hearth so long !
 The prayer went up through midnight's breathless gloom,
 And the vain yearning woke 'midst festal song !
 Hold fast thy buried isles, thy towers o'erthrown—
 But all is not thine own.

To thee the love of woman hath gone down,
 Dark flow thy tides o'er manhood's noble head,
 O'er youth's bright locks, and beauty's flowery crown,
 Yet must thou hear a voice—Restore the dead !
 Earth shall reclaim her precious things from thee !—
 Restore the dead, thou sea !

BRING FLOWERS.

BRING flowers, young flowers, for the festal board,
 To wreath the cup ere the wine is pour'd ;
 Bring flowers ! they are springing in wood and vale,
 Their breath floats out on the southern gale,
 And the touch of the sunbeam hath waked the rose,
 To deck the hall where the bright wine flows.

Bring flowers to strew in the conqueror's path—
 He hath shaken thrones with his stormy wrath !
 He comes with the spoils of nations back,
 The vines lie crush'd in his chariot's track
 The turf looks red where he won the day
 Bring flowers to die in the conqueror's way !

Bring flowers to the captive's lonely cell,
 They have tales of the joyous woods to tell ;
 Of the free blue streams, and the glowing sky,
 And the bright world shut from his languid eye ;
 They will bear him a thought of the sunny hours,
 And a dream of his youth—bring him flowers, wild flowers !

Bring flowers, fresh flowers, for the bride to wear !
 They were born to blush in her shining hair.
 She is leaving the home of her childhood's mirth,
 She hath bid farewell to her father's hearth.
 Her place is now by another's side—
 Bring flowers for the locks of the fair young bride !

Bring flowers, pale flowers, o'er the bier to shed,
A crown for the brow of the early dead !
For this through its leaves hath the white rose burst,
For this in the woods was the violet nursed !
Though they smile in vain for what once was ours,
They are love's last gift—bring ye flowers, pale flowers !

Bring flowers to the shrine where we kneel in prayer,
They are nature's offering, their place is *there* !
They speak of hope to the fainting heart,
With a voice of promise they come and part,
They sleep in dust through the wintry hours,
They break forth in glory—bring flowers, bright flowers !

THE CRUSADER'S RETURN.

ALAS ! the mother that him bare,
If she had been in presence there,
In his wan cheeks and sunburnt hair,
She had not known her child.—*Marmion.*

REST, pilgrim, rest !—thou'rt from the Syrian land,
Thou'rt from the wild and wondrous East, I know
By the long-withered palm-branch in thy hand,
And by the darkness of thy sunburnt brow.
Alas ! the bright, the beautiful, who part,
So full of hope, for that far country's bourne !
Alas ! the weary and the changed in heart,
And dimmed in aspect, who like thee return !

Thou'rt faint—stay, rest thee from thy toils at last :
Through the high chestnuts lightly plays the breeze,
The stars gleam out, the *Ave* hour is pass'd,
The sailor's hymn hath died along the seas.
Thou'rt fain and worn—hear'st thou the fountain welling
By the grey pillars of yon ruin'd shrine ?
Seest thou the dewy grapes, before thee swelling ?—
He that hath left me train'd that loaded vine !

He was a child when thus the bower he wove,
(Oh ! hath a day fled since his childhood's time ?)
That I might sit and hear the sound I love,
Beneath its shade—the convent's vesper chime.
And sit *thou* there !—for he was gentle ever,
With his glad voice he would have welcomed thee,
And brought fresh fruits to cool thy parch'd lips' fever—
There in his place thou'rt resting—where is he ?

If I could hear that laughing voice again,
But once again !—how oft it wanders by,
In the still hours, like some remember'd strain,
Troubling the heart with its wild melody !
Thou has seen much, tired pilgrim ! hast thou seen
In that far land, the chosen land of yore,
A youth—my Guido—with the fiery mien,
And the dark eye of this Italian shore ?

The dark, clear, lightning eye !—on Heaven and earth
It smiled—as if man were not dust it smiled !
The very air seem'd kindling with his mirth,
And I—my heart grew young before my child !
My blessed child !—I had but him—yet he
Fill'd all my home ev'n with o'erflowing joy,
Sweet laughter, and wild song, and footstep free—
Where is he now ?—my pride, my flower, my boy !

His sunny childhood melted from my sight,
Like a spring dew-drop—then his forehead wore
A prouder look—his eye a keener light—
I knew these woods might be his world no more !
He loved me—but he left me !—thus they go,
Whom we have rear'd, watch'd, bless'd, too much adored !
He heard the trumpet of the Red-Cross blow,
And bounded from me with his father's sword !

Thou weep'st—I tremble—thou hast seen the slain
Pressing a bloody turf ; the young and fair,
With their pale beauty strewn o'er the plain
Where hosts have met—speak ! answer ! was *he* there ?
Oh ! hath his smile departed ?—Could the grave
Shut o'er those bursts of bright and tameless glee ?—
No ! I shall yet behold his dark locks wave—
That look gives hope—I knew it could not be !

Still weep'st thou, wanderer ?—some fond mother's glance
O'er thee too brooded in thine early years—
Think'st thou of her, whose gentle eye, perchance,
Bathed all thy faded hair with parting tears ?
Speak, for thy tears disturb me !—what art thou ?
Why dost thou hide thy face, yet weeping on ?
Look up ! oh ! is it—that wan cheek and brow !—
Is it—alas ! yet joy !—my son, my son !

THEKLA'S SONG : OR, THE VOICE OF
A SPIRIT.

FROM THE GERMAN OF SCHILLER.

THIS song is said to have been composed by Schiller in answer to the inquiries of his friends respecting the fate of *Thekla*, whose beautiful character is withdrawn from the tragedy of "*Wallenstein's Death*," after her resolution to visit the grave of her lover is made known.

" 'Tis not merely
The human being's *pride* that peoples space
With life and mystical predominance ;
Since likewise for the stricken heart of *love*
This visible nature, and this common world,
Are all too narrow."

COLERIDGE'S *Translation of Wallenstein.*

Ask'st thou my home ?—my pathway wouldst thou know,
When from thine eye my floating shadow pass'd ?
Was not my work fulfill'd and closed below ?
Had I not lived and loved ?—my lot was cast.

Wouldst thou ask where the nightingale is gone,
That melting into song her soul away,
Gave the spring-breeze what witch'd thee in its tone ?—
But while she loved, she lived, in that deep lay !

Think'st thou my heart its lost one hath not found !—
Yes ! we are one, oh ! trust me, we have met,
Where nought again may part what love hath bound,
Where falls no tear, and whispers no regret.

There shalt *thou* find us, there with us be blest,
If as *our* love *thy* love is pure and true !
There dwells my father,* sinless and at rest,
Where the fierce murderer may no more pursue.

* *Wallenstein.*
F F 2

And well he feels, no error of the dust
 Drew to the stars of Heaven his mortal ken,
 There it is with us, ev'n as is our trust,
 He that believes, is near the holy *then*.

There shall each feeling beautiful and high,
 Keep the sweet promise of its earthly day ;—
 Oh ! fear thou not to dream with waking eye !
 There lies deep meaning oft in childish play.

THE REVELLERS.

RING, joyous chords !—ring out again !
 A swifter still, and a wilder strain !
 They are here—the fair face and the careless heart,
 And stars shall wane ere the mirthful part.—
 But I met a dimly mournful glance,
 In a sudden turn of the flying dance ;
 I heard the tone of a heavy sigh,
 In a pause of the thrilling melody !
 And it is not well that woe should breathe
 On the bright spring-flowers of the festal wreath !—
 Ye that to thought or to grief belong,
 Leave, leave the hall of song !

Ring, joyous chords !—but who art *thou*
 With the shadowy locks o'er thy pale young brow,
 And the world of dreamy gloom that lies
 In the misty depths of thy soft dark eyes ?
 Thou hast loved, fair girl ! thou hast loved too well !
 Thou art mourning now o'er a broken spell ;
 Thou hast pour'd thy heart's rich treasures forth,
 And art unrepaid for their priceless worth !
 Mourn on !—yet come thou not *here* the while,
 It is but a pain to see thee smile !
 There is not a tone in our songs for thee—
 Home with thy sorrows flee !

Ring, joyous chords !—ring out again !—
 But what dost thou with the Revel's train ?
 A silvery voice through the soft air floats,
 But thou hast no part in the gladdening notes
 There are bright young faces that pass thee
 But they fix no glance of thy wandering eye

Away ! there's a void in thy yearning breast,
Thou weary man ! wilt thou *here* find rest ?
Away ! for thy thoughts from the scene have fled,
And the love of *thy* spirit is with the dead !
Thou art but more lone midst the sounds of mirth—
Back to thy silent hearth !

Ring, joyous chords !—ring forth again !
A swifter still, and a wilder strain !—
But *thou*, though a reckless mien be thine,
And thy cup be crown'd with the foaming wine,
By the fitful bursts of thy laughter loud,
By thine eye's quick flash through its troubled cloud,
I know thee !—it is but the wakeful fear
Of a haunted bosom that brings thee here !
I know thee !—thou fearest the solemn night,
With her piercing stars and her deep wind's might !
There's a tone in her voice which thou fain wouldst shun,
For it asks what the secret soul hath done !
And thou—there's a dark weight on thine—away !—
Back to thy home and pray !

Ring, joyous chords !—ring out again !
A swifter still, and a wilder strain !
And bring fresh wreaths !—we will banish all
Save the free in heart from our festive hall.
On ! through the maze of the fleet dance, on !—
But where are the young and the lovely ?—gone !
Where are the brows with the red rose crown'd,
And the floating forms with the bright zone bound ?
And the waving locks and the flying feet,
That still should be where the mirthful meet !—
They are gone—they are fled—they are parted all—
Alas ! the forsaken hall !

THE CONQUEROR'S SLEEP.

SLEEP 'midst thy banners furl'd !
Yes ! thou art there, upon thy buckler lying,
With the soft wind unfelt around thee sighing,
Thou chief of hosts, whose trumpet shakes the world !
Sleep while the babe sleeps on its mother's breast—
Oh ! strong is night—for thou too art at rest !

Our Lady's Well.

Stillness hath smooth'd thy brow,
 And now might love keep timid vigils by thee,
 Now might the foe with stealthy foot draw nigh thee.
 Alike unconscious and defenceless thou !
 Tread lightly, watchers ! now the field is won,
 Break not the rest of nature's weary son !

erchance some lovely dream
 Back from the stormy fight thy soul is bearing
 To the green places of thy boyish daring,
 And all the windings of thy native stream ;—
 Why, this were joy ! upon the tented plain,
 Dream on, thou conqueror !—be a child again !

But thou wilt wake at morn,
 With thy strong passions to the conflict leaping,
 And thy dark, troubled thoughts all earth o'ersweeping ;
 So wilt thou rise, oh ! thou of woman born !
 And put thy terrors on, till none may dare
 Look upon thee—the tired one, slumbering there !

Why, so the peasant sleeps
 Beneath his vine !—and man must kneel before thee,
 And for his birthright vainly still implore thee !
 Shalt thou be stay'd because thy brother weeps ?—
 Wake ! and forget that 'midst a dreaming world,
 Thou hast lain thus, with all thy banners furl'd !

Forget that thou, ev'n thou,
 Hast feebly shiver'd when the wind pass'd o'er thee,
 And sunk to rest upon the earth which bore thee,
 And felt the night-dew chill thy fevered brow !
 Wake with the trumpet, with the spear press on !—
 Yet shall the dust take home its mortal son.

 OUR LADY'S WELL.*

FOUNT of the woods ! thou art hid no more,
 From Heaven's clear eye, as in time of yore !
 For the roof hath sunk from thy mossy walls,
 And the sun's free glance on thy slumber falls ;

* A beautiful spring in the woods near St. Asaph, formerly covered in with a chapel, now in ruins. It was dedicated to the Virgin, and, according to Pennant, much the resort of pilgrims.

And the dim tree-shadows across thee pass.
As the boughs are sway'd o'er thy silvery glass ;
And the reddening leaves to thy breast are blown,
When the autumn wind hath a stormy tone ;
And thy bubbles rise to the flashing rain—
Bright Fount ! thou art nature's own again !

Fount of the vale ! thou art sought no more
By the pilgrim's foot, as in time of yore,
When he came from afar, his beads to tell,
And to chant his hymn at our Our Lady's Well.
There is heard no *Ave* through thy bowers,
Thou art gleaming lone 'midst thy water-flowers !
But the herd may drink from thy gushing wave,
And there may the reaper his forehead lave,
And the woodman seeks thee not in vain—
Bright Fount ! thou art nature's own again !

Fount of the Virgin's ruined shrine,
A voice that speaks of the past is thine !
It mingles the tone of a thoughtful sigh,
With the notes that ring through the laughing sky ;
'Midst the mirthful song of the summer bird,
And the sound of the breeze, it will yet be heard !—
Why is it that thus we may gaze on thee,
To the brilliant sunshine sparkling free?—
'Tis that all on earth is of *Time's* domain—
He hath made thee nature's own again !

Fount of the chapel with ages grey !
Thou art springing freshly amidst decay !
Thy rites are closed, and thy cross lies low,
And the changeful hours breathe o'er thee now !
Yet if at thine altar one holy thought
In man's deep spirit of old hath wrought ;
If peace to the mourner hath here been given,
Or prayer, from a chasten'd heart, to Heaven,
Be the spot still hallow'd while Time shall reign,
Who hath made thee nature's own again !

THE PARTING OF SUMMER.

THOU'RT bearing hence thy roses,
Glad Summer, fare thee well !
Thou'rt singing thy last melodies
In every wood and dell.

But ere the golden sunset
Of thy latest lingering day,
Oh ! tell me, o'er this chequer'd earth,
How hast thou pass'd away ?

Brightly, sweet Summer ! brightly
Thine hours have floated by,
To the joyous birds of the woodland boughs,
The rangers of the sky.

And brightly in the forests,
To the wild deer wandering free ;
And brightly 'midst the garden flowers,
To the happy murmuring bee :

But how to human bosoms,
With all their hopes and fears,
And thoughts that make them eagle-wings,
To pierce the unborn years ?

Sweet Summer ! to the captive
Thou hast flown in burning dreams
Of the woods, with all their whispering leave
And the blue rejoicing streams ;—

To the wasted and the weary
On the bed of sickness bound,
In swift delirious fantasies,
That changed with every sound ;—

To the sailor on the billows,
In longings, wild and vain,
For the gushing founts and breezy hills,
And the homes of earth again !

The Songs of Our Fathers.

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And unto me, glad Summer !
How hast thou flown to me ?
My chainless footstep naught hath kept
From thy haunts of song and glee.

Thou hast flown in wayward visions,
In memories of the dead—
In shadows, from a troubled heart,
O'er thy sunny pathway shed :

In brief and sudden strivings,
To fling a weight aside—
'Midst these thy melodies have ceased
And all thy roses died.

But, oh ! thou gentle Summer !
If I greet thy flowers once more,
Bring me again the buoyancy
Wherewith my soul should soar !

Give me to hail thy sunshine,
With song and spirit free ;
Or in a purer air than this
May that next meeting be !

THE SONGS OF OUR FATHERS.

Old songs, the precious music of the heart."
"Sing aloud

WORDSWORTH

SING them upon the sunny hills,
When days are long and bright,
And the blue gleam of shining rills
Is loveliest to the sight !
Sing them along the misty moor,
Where ancient hunters roved
And swell them through the torrent's roar,
The songs our fathers loved !

The songs their souls rejoiced to hear,
When harps were in the hall,
And each proud note made lance and spear
Thrill on the banner'd wall :

The Songs of our Fathers.

The songs that through our valleys green,
Sent on from age to age,
Like his own river's voice, have been
The peasant's heritage.

The reaper sings them when the vale
Is fill'd with plummy sheaves
The woodman, by the starlight pale,
Cheer'd homeward through the leaves :
And unto them the glancing oars
A joyous measure keep,
Where the dark rocks that crest our shores
Dash back the foaming deep.

So let it be !—a light they shed
O'er each old fount and grove ;
A memory of the gentle dead,
A lingering spell of love.
Murmuring the names of mighty men,
They bid our streams roll on,
And link high thoughts to every glen
Where valiant deeds were done.

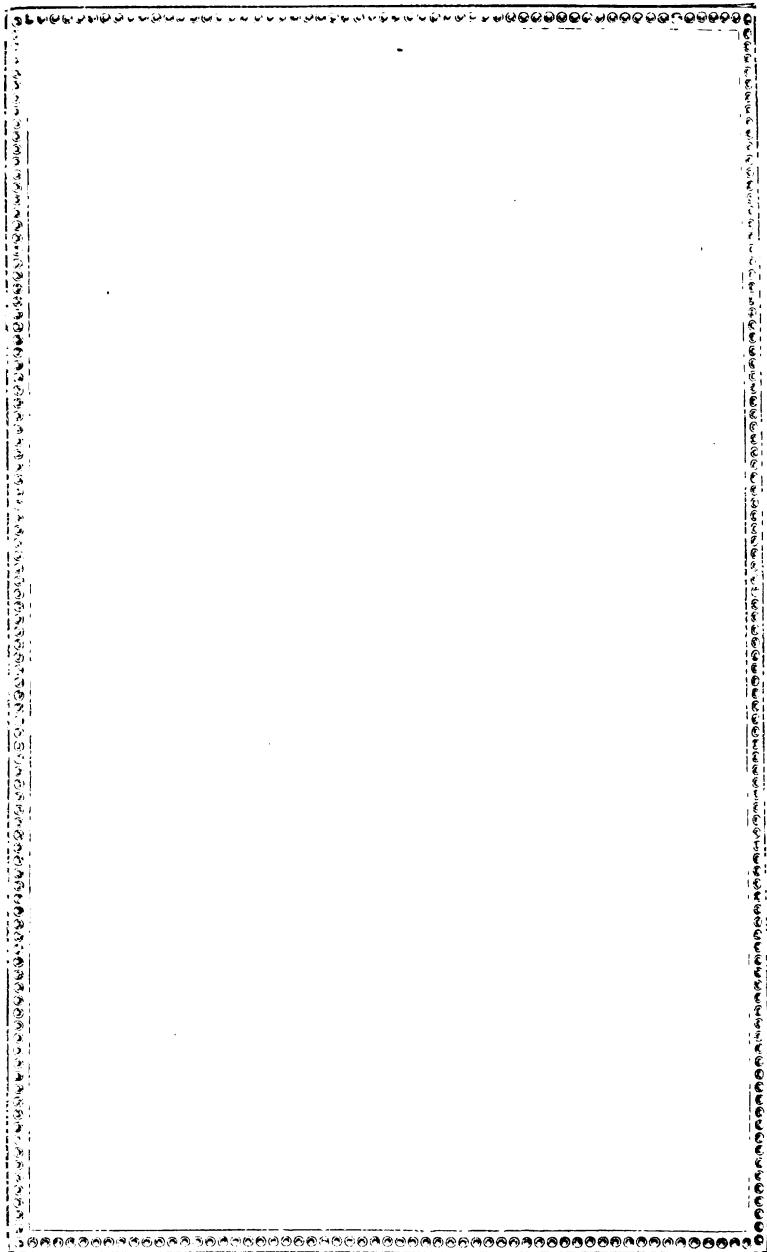
Teach them your children round the hearth,
When evening-fires burn clear,
And in the fields of harvest mirth,
And on the hills of deer :
So shall each unforgotten word,
When far those loved ones roam,
Call back the hearts which once it stirr'd,
To childhood's holy home.

The green woods of their native land
Shall whisper in the strain,
The voices of their household band,
Shall breathe their names again ;
The heathery heights in vision rise
Where, like the stag, they roved—
Sing to your sons those melodies,
The songs your fathers loved !



"Pray—ere yet the dark hours be,
Lift the heart and bend the knee."

[p. 465.]



THE WORLD IN THE OPEN AIR.

COME, while in freshness and dew it lies,
To the world that is under the free, blue skies !
Leave ye man's home, and forget his care—
There breathes no sigh on the dayspring's air.

Come to the woods, in whose mossy dells
A light all made for the poet dwells ;
A light, colour'd softly by tender leaves,
Whence the primrose a mellow glow receives.

The stock-dove is there in the beechen-tree,
And the lulling tone of the honey-bee ;
And the voice of cool waters 'midst feathery fern,
Shedding sweet sounds from some hidden urn.

There is life, there is youth, there is tameless mirth,
Where the streams, with the lilies they wear, have birth ;
There is peace where the alders are whispering low :
Come from man's dwellings, with all their woe !

Yes ! we will come—we will leave behind
The homes and the sorrows of human kind ;
It is well to rove where the river leads
Its bright, blue vein along sunny meads :

It is well through the rich, wild woods to go,
And to pierce the haunts of the fawn and doe ;
And to hear the gushing of gentle springs,
When the heart has been fretted by worldly stings.

And to watch the colours that flit and pass,
With insect-wings through the wavy grass ;
And the silvery gleams o'er the ash-tree's bark,
Borne in with a breeze through the foliage dark.

Joyous and far shall our wanderings be,
As the flight of birds o'er the glittering sea ;
To the woods, to the dingles where violets blow,
We will bear no memory of earthly woe.

Kindred Hearts.

But if, by the forest-brook, we meet
 A line like the pathway of former feet ;—
 If, 'midst the hills, in some lonely spot,
 We reach the grey ruins of tower or cot ;—

If the cell, where a hermit of old hath pray'd,
 Lift up its cross through the solemn shade ;—
 Or if some nook where the wild-flowers wave,
 Bear token sad of a mortal grave,—

Doubt not but *there* will our steps be stay'd,
 There our quick spirits awhile delay'd ;
 There will thought fix our impatient eyes,
 And win back our hearts to their sympathies.

For what, though the mountains and skies be fair,
 Steep'd in soft hues of the summer air,—
 'Tis the soul of man, by its hopes and dreams,
 That lights up all nature with living gleams.

Where it hath suffer'd and nobly striven,
 Where it hath pour'd forth its vows to Heaven ;
 Where to repose it hath brightly past,
 O'er this green earth there is glory cast.

And by that soul, amidst groves and rills,
 And flocks that feed on a thousand hills,
 Birds of the forest, and flowers of the sod,
We, only we, may be link'd to God !

KINDRED HEARTS.

OH ! ask not, hope thou not too much
 Of sympathy below ;
 Few are the hearts whence one same touch
 Bids the sweet fountains flow :
 Few—and by still conflicting powers
 Forbidden here to meet—
 Such ties would make this life of ours
 Too fair for aught so fleet.

It may be that thy brother's eye
 Sees not as thine, which turns
 In such deep reverence to the sky,
 Where the rich sunset burns :

It may be that the breath of spring,
Born amidst violets lone,
A rapture o'er thy soul can bring—
A dream, to his unknown.

The tune that speaks of other times—
A sorrowful delight !
The melody of distant chimes,
The sound of waves by night ;
The wind that, with so many a tone,
Some chord within can thrill,—
These may have language all thine own,
To *him* a mystery still.

Yet scorn thou not for this, the true
And steadfast love of years ;
The kindly, that from childhood grew,
The faithful to thy tears !
If there be one that o'er the dead
Hath in thy grief borne part,
And watch'd through sickness by thy bed,—
Call *his* a kindred heart !

But for those bonds all perfect made,
Wherein bright spirits blend,
Like sister flowers of one sweet shade,
With the same breeze that bend,
For that full bliss of thought allied,
Never to mortals given,—
Oh ! lay thy lovely dreams aside,
Or lift them unto heaven.

THE DIAL OF FLOWERS.*

'Twas a lovely thought to mark the hours,
As they floated in light away,
By the opening and the folding flowers,
That laugh to the summer's day.

Thus had each moment its own rich hue,
And its graceful cup and bell,
In whose colour'd vase might sleep the dew,
Like a pearl in an ocean-shell.

* This dial was, I believe, formed by Linnæus, and marked the hours by the opening and closing, at regular intervals, of the flowers arranged in it.

The Cross in the Wilderness.

To such sweet signs might the time have flow'd
In a golden current on,
Ere from the garden, man's first abode,
The glorious guests were gone.

So might the days have been brightly told—
Those days of song and dreams—
When shepherds gather'd their flocks of old
By the blue Arcadian streams.

So in those isles of delight, that rest
Far off in a breezeless main,
Which many a bark, with a weary quest,
Has sought, but still in vain.

Yet is not life, in its real flight,
Mark'd thus—even thus—on earth,
By the closing of one hope's delight,
And another's gentle birth?

Oh! let us live, so that flower by flower,
Shutting in turn, may leave
▲ lingerer still for the sunset hour,
A charm for the shaded eve.

THE CROSS IN THE WILDERNESS.

SILENT and mournful sat an Indian chief,
In the red sunset, by a grassy tomb;
His eyes, that might not weep, were dark with grief,
And his arms folded in majestic gloom,
And his bow lay unstrung beneath the mound,
Which sanctified the gorgeous waste around.

For a pale cross above its greensward rose,
Telling the cedars and the pines that there
Man's heart and hope had struggled with his woes,
And lifted from the dust a voice of prayer.
Now all was hush'd—and eve's last splendour shone
With a rich sadness on th' attesting stone.

There came a lonely traveller o'er the wild,
And he too paused in reverence by that grave,
Asking the tale of its memorial, piled
Between the forest and the lake's bright wave;
Till, as a wind might stir a wither'd oak,
On the deep dream of age his accents broke.

And the grey chieftain, slowly rising, said—

“ I listen'd for the words, which, years ago,
Pass'd o'er these waters : though the voice is fled
Which made them as a singing fountain's flow,
Yet, when I sit in their long-faded track,
Sometimes the forest's murmur gives them back.

“ Ask'st thou of him, whose house is lone beneath ?
I was an eagle in my youthful pride,
When o'er the seas he came, with summer's breath,
To dwell amidst us, on the lake's green side.
Many the times of flowers have been since then—
Many, but bringing naught like *him* again !

“ Not with the hunter's bow and spear he came,
O'er the blue hills to chase the flying roe ;
Not the dark glory of the woods to tame,
Laying the cedars like the corn-stalks low ;
But to spread tidings of all holy things,
Gladdening our souls, as with the morning's wings.

“ Doth not yon cypress whisper how we met,
I and my brethren that from earth are gone,
Under its boughs to hear his voice, which yet
Seems through their gloom to send a silvery tone ?
He told of One, the grave's dark bonds who broke,
And our hearts burn'd within us as he spoke.

“ He told of far and sunny lands, which lie
Beyond the dust wherein our fathers dwell :
Bright must they be !—for *there* are none that die,
And none that weep, and none that say ‘ Farewell !’
He came to guide us thither ;—but away
The Happy call'd him, and he might not stay.

“ We saw him slowly fade,—athirst, perchance,
For the fresh waters of that lovely clime ;
Yet was there still a sunbeam in his glance,
And on his gleaming hair no touch of time,—
Therefore we hoped :—but now the lake looks dim,
For the green summer comes,—and finds not him !

“ We gather'd round him in the dewy hour
Of one still morn, beneath his chosen tree ;
From his clear voice, at first, the words of power
Came low, like moanings of a distant sea ;
But swell'd and shook the wilderness ere long,
As if the spirit of the breeze grew strong.

"And then once more they trembled on his tongue,
And his white eyelids flutter'd, and his head
Fell back, and mist upon his forehead hung,—
Know'st thou not how we pass to join the dead?
It is enough!—he sank upon my breast—
Our friend that loved us, he was gone to rest!

"We buried him where he was wont to pray,
By the calm lake, e'en here, at eventide;
We rear'd this Cross in token where he lay,
For on the Cross, he said, his Lord had died!
Now hath he surely reach'd, o'er mount and wave,
That flowery land whose green turf hides no grave.

"But I am sad!—I mourn the clear light taken
Back from my people, o'er whose place it shone,
The pathway to the better shore forsaken,
And the true words forgotten, save by one,
Who hears them faintly sounding from the past,
Mingled with death-songs in each fitful blast."

Then spoke the wanderer forth with kindling eye:—
"Son of the Wilderness! despair thou not,
Though the bright hour may seem to thee gone by,
And the cloud settled o'er thy nation's lot!
Heaven darkly works;—yet where the seed hath been
There shall the fruitage, glowing yet, be seen.

"Hope on, hope ever!—by the sudden springing
Of green leaves which the winter hid so long;
And by the bursts of free, triumphant singing,
After cold silent months, the woods among;
And by the rending of the frozen chains,
Which bound the glorious rivers on their plains;

"Deem not the words of light that here were spoken,
But as a lovely song to leave no trace,
Yet shall the gloom which wraps thy hills be broken,
And the full dayspring rise upon thy race!
And fading mists the better path disclose,
And the wide desert blossom as the rose."

So by the Cross they parted, in the wild,
Each fraught with musings for life's after-day,
Memories to visit *one*, the forest's child,
By many a blue stream in its lonely way;
And upon *one*, midst busy throngs to press
Deep thoughts and sad, yet full of holiness.

OUR DAILY PATHS.*

"Naught shall prevail against us, or disturb
Our cheerful faith that all which we behold
Is full of blessings."

WORDSWORTH.

THERE's beauty all around our paths, if but our watchful eyes
Can trace it midst familiar things, and through their lowly guise;
We may find it where a hedgerow showers its blossoms o'er our way,
Or a cottage window sparkles forth in the last red light of day.

We may find it where a spring shines clear beneath an aged tree,
With the foxglove o'er the water's glass, borne downwards by the
bee;
Or where a swift and sunny gleam on the birchen stems is thrown,
As a soft wind playing parts the leaves, in copses green and lone.

We may find it in the winter boughs, as they cross the cold blue sky,
While soft on icy pool and stream their pencill'd shadows lie,
When we look upon their tracery, by the fairy frost-work bound,
Whence the flitting redbreast shakes a shower of crystals to the
ground.

* This little poem derives an additional interest from being affectingly associated with a name no less distinguished than that of the late Mr. Dugald Stewart. The admiration he always expressed for Mrs. Hemans's poetry, was mingled with regret that she so generally made choice of melancholy subjects; and on one occasion, he sent her, through a mutual friend, a message suggestive of his wish that she would employ her fine talents in giving more consolatory views of the ways of Providence, thus infusing comfort and cheer into the bosoms of her readers, in a spirit of Christian philosophy, which, he thought, would be more consonant with the pious mind and loving heart displayed in every line she wrote, than dwelling on what was painful and depressing, however beautifully and touchingly such subjects might be treated of. This message was faithfully transmitted, and almost by return of post, Mrs. Hemans (who was then residing in Wales) sent to the kind friend to whom it had been forwarded, the poem of "Our Daily Paths," requesting it might be given to Mr. Stewart, with an assurance of her gratitude for the interest he took in her writings, and alleging as the reason of the mournful strain which pervaded them, "that a cloud hung over her life which she could not always rise above."

The letter reached Mr. Stewart just as he was stepping into the carriage, to leave his country residence (Kinneil House, the property of the Duke of Hamilton) for Edinburgh—the last time, alas! his presence was ever to gladden that happy home, as his valuable life was closed very shortly afterwards. The poem was read to him by his daughter, on his way to Edinburgh, and he expressed himself in the highest degree charmed and gratified with the result of his suggestion; and some of the lines which pleased him more particularly were often repeated to him during the few remaining weeks of his life.

Yes ! beauty dwells in all our paths—but sorrow too is there :
 How oft some cloud within us dims the bright, still summer air !
 When we carry our sick hearts abroad amidst the joyous things,
 That through the leafy places glance on many-colour'd wings,

With shadows from the past we fill the happy woodland shades,
 And a mournful memory of the dead is with us in the glades ;
 And our dream-like fancies lend the wind an echo's plaintive tone
 Of voices, and of melodies, and of silvery laughter gone.

But are we free to do even thus—to wander as we will,
 Bearing sad visions through the grove, and o'er the breezy hill ?
 No ! in our daily paths lie cares, that oftentimes bind us fast,
 While from their narrow round we see the golden day fleet past.

They hold us from the woodlark's haunts, and violet dingles, back,
 And from all the lovely sounds and gleams in the shining river's
 track ;
 They bar us from our heritage of spring-time, hope, and mirth,
 And weigh our burden'd spirits down with the cumbering dust of
 earth.

Yet should this be ? Too much, too soon, despondingly we yield !
 A better lesson we are taught by the lilies of the field !
 A sweeter by the birds of heaven—which tell us, in their flight,
 Of One that through the desert air for ever guides them right.

Shall not this knowledge calm our hearts, and bid vain conflicts
 cease ?
 Ay, when they commune with themselves in holy hours of peace
 And feel that by the lights and clouds through which our pathway
 lies,
 By the beauty and the grief alike, we are training for the skies !

LAST RITES.

By the mighty minster's bell,
 Tolling with a sudden swell ;
 By the colours half-mast high,
 O'er the sea hung mournfully ;
 Know, a prince hath died !

By the drum's dull muffled sound,
By the arms that sweep the ground,
By the volleying muskets' tone,
Speak ye of a soldier gone
In his manhood's pride.

By the chanted psalm that fills
Reverently the ancient hills,*
Learn, that from his harvests done,
Peasants bear a brother on
To his last repose.

By the pall of snowy white
Through the yew-trees gleaming bright ;
By the garland on the bier,
Weep ! a maiden claims thy tear—
Broken is the rose !

Which is the tenderest rite of all ?
Buried virgin's coronal,
Requiem o'er the monarch's head,
Farewell gun for warrior dead,
Herdsman's funeral hymn ?

Tells not each of human woe.
Each of hope and strength brought low ?
Number each with holy things,
If one chastening thought it brings,
Ere life's day grow dim !

THE HEBREW MOTHER.

THE rose was in rich bloom on Sharon's plain,
When a young mother, with her first-born, thence
Went up to Zion ; for the boy was vow'd
Unto the Temple service :—by the hand
She led him, and her silent soul, the while,
Oft as the dewy laughter of his eye
Met her sweet serious glance, rejoiced to think
That aught so pure, so beautiful, was hers,
To bring before her God. So pass'd they on,
O'er Judah's hills ; and wheresoe'er the leaves

* A custom still retained at rural funerals, in some parts of England and Wales.

Of the broad sycamore made sounds at noon,
Like lulling rain-drops, or the olive boughs,
With their cool dimness, cross'd the sultry blue
Of Syria's heaven, she paused, that he might rest ;
Yet from her own meek eyelids chased the sleep
That weigh'd their dark fringe down, to sit and watch
The crimson deepening o'er his cheek's repose,
As at a red flower's heart. And where a fount
Lay like a twilight star 'midst palmy shades,
Making its bank green gems along the wild,
There, too, she linger'd, from the diamond wave
Drawing bright water for his rosy lips,
And softly parting clusters of jet curls
To bathe his brow. At last the Fane was reach'd,
The Earth's One Sanctuary—and rapture hush'd
Her bosom, as before her, through the day,
It rose, a mountain of white marble, steep'd
In light, like floating gold. But when that hour
Waned to the farewell moment, when the boy
Lifted, through rainbow-gleaming tears, his eye
Beseechingly to hers, and half in fear
Turn'd from the white-robed priest, and round her arm
Clung e'en as joy clings—the deep spring-tide
Of nature then swell'd high, and o'er her child
Bending, her soul broke forth, in mingled sounds
Of weeping and sad song.—“Alas !” she cried,

“Alas ! my boy, thy gentle grasp is on me ;
The bright tears quiver in thy pleading eyes,
And now fond thoughts arise,
And silver cords again to earth have won me ;
And like a vine thou claspest my full heart—
How shall I hence depart ?

“How the lone paths retrace where thou wert playing
So late, along the mountains, at my side ?
And I, in joyous pride,
By every place of flowers my course delaying,
Wove, e'en as pearls, the lilies round thy hair,
Beholding thee so fair !

“And, oh ! the home whence thy bright smile hath parted,
Will it not seem as if the sunny day
Turn'd from its door away ?
While through its chambers wandering, weary-hearted,
I languish for thy voice, which past me still,
Went like a singing rill ?

"Under the palm-trees thou no more shalt meet me,
When from the fount at evening I return,
 With the full water-urn ;
Nor will thy sleep's low dove-like breathings greet me,
As 'midst the silence of the stars I wake,
 And watch for thy dear sake.

"And thou, will slumber's dewy cloud fall round thee,
Without thy mother's hand to smooth thy bed ?
 Wilt thou not vainly spread
Thine arms, when darkness as a veil hath wound thee,
To fold my neck, and lift up, in thy fear,
 A cry which none shall hear ?

"What have I said, my child ?—Will *He* not hear thee,
Who the young ravens heareth from their nest ?
 Shall *He* not guard thy rest,
And, in the hush of holy midnight near thee,
Breathe o'er thy soul, and fill its dreams with joy ?—
 Thou shalt sleep soft, my boy.

"I give thee to thy God—the God that gave thee,
A well-spring of deep gladness to my heart !
 And precious as thou art,
And pure as dew of Hermon, *He* shall have thee,
My own, my beautiful, my undefiled !
 And thou shalt be *His* child.

"Therefore, farewell !—I go, my soul may fail me,
As the hart panteth for the water brooks,
 Yearning for thy sweet looks.—
But thou, my first-born, droop not, nor bewail me !
Thou in the Shadow of the Rock shalt dwell,
 The Rock of Strength.—Farewell !"

THE WRECK.

ALL night the booming minute gun
Had pealed along the deep,
And mournfully the rising sun
Look'd o'er the tide-worn steep.

A bark from India's coral strand,
Before the raging blast,
Had vail'd her topsails to the sand,
And bow'd her noble mast.

The queenly ship !—brave hearts had striven
And true ones died with her !—
We saw her mighty cable riven,
Like floating gossamer.
We saw her proud flag struck that morn,
A star once o'er the seas—
Her anchor gone, her deck upturn—
And sadder things than these !

We saw her treasures cast away,—
The rocks with pearls were sown,
And strangely sad, the ruby's ray
Flash'd out o'er fretted stone.
And gold was strewn the wet sands o'er,
Like ashes by a breeze ;
And gorgeous robes—but oh ! that shore
Had sadder things than these !

We saw the strong man still and low,
A crush'd reed thrown aside ;
Yet, by that rigid lip and brow,
Not without strife he died.
And near him on the seaweed lay—
Till then we had not wept—
But well our gushing hearts might say,
That there a *mother* slept !

For her pale arms a babe had prest,
With such a wreathing grasp,
Billows had dash'd o'er that fond breast,
Yet not undone the clasp.
Her very tresses had been flung
To wrap the fair child's form,
Where still their wet long streamers hung
All tangled by the storm.

And beautiful, midst that wild scene,
Gleam'd up the boy's dead face,
Like slumber's, trustingly serene,
In melancholy grace.

Deep in her bosom lay his head,
With half-shut violet eye—
He had known little of her dread,
Nought of her agony !

Oh ! human love, whose yearning heart
Through all things vainly true,
So stamps upon thy mortal part
Its passionate adieu—
Surely thou hast another lot,
There is some home for thee,
Where thou shalt rest, rememb'ring not
The moaning of the sea !

THE TRUMPET.

THE trumpet's voice hath roused the land,
Light up the beacon-pyre !—
A hundred hills have seen the brand,
And waved the sign of fire.
A hundred banners to the breeze
Their gorgeous folds have cast—
And, hark ! was that the sound of seas ?—
A king to war went past.

The chief is arming in his hall,
The peasant by his hearth ;
The mourner hears the thrilling call,
And rises from the earth.
The mother on her first-born son
Looks with a boding eye—
They come not back, though all be won,
Whose young hearts leap so high.

The bard hath ceased his song, and bound
The falchion to his side ;
E'en for the marriage altar crown'd
The lover quits his bride.
And all this haste, and change, and fear,
By *earthly* clarion spread !—
How will it be when kingdoms hear
The blast that wakes the Dead ?

EVENING PRAYER,

AT A GIRLS' SCHOOL.

"Now in thy youth, beseech of Him
Who giveth, upbraiding not ;
That His light in thy heart become not dim,
And His love be unforgot ;
And thy God, in the darkest of days, will be
Greenness, and beauty, and strength to thee."

BERNARD BARTON.

HUSH ! 'tis a holy hour—the quiet room
Seems like a temple, while yon soft lamp sheds
A faint and starry radiance, through the gloom
And the sweet stillness, down on fair young heads,
With all their clust'ring locks, untouch'd by care,
And bow'd, as flowers are bow'd with night, in prayer.

Gaze on—'tis lovely !—Childhood's lip and cheek,
Mantling beneath its earnest brow of thought !
Gaze—yet what seest thou in those fair, and meek,
And fragile things, as but for sunshine wrought ?—
Thou seest what Grief must nurture for the sky,
What Death must fashion for Eternity !

Oh ! joyous creatures ! that will sink to rest
Lightly, when those pure orisons are done,
As birds with slumber's honey-dew opprest,
'Midst the dim folded leaves, at set of sun—
Lift up your hearts ! though yet no sorrow lies
Dark in the summer-heaven of those clear eyes.

Though fresh within your breasts th' untroubled springs
Of Hope make melody where'er ye tread,
And o'er your sleep bright shadows, from the wings
Of spirits visiting but youth, be spread ;
Yet in those flute-like voices, mingling low,
Is woman's tenderness—how soon her woe !

Her lot is on you—silent tears to weep,
And patient smiles to wear through suffering's hour,
And sumless riches, from affection's deep,
To pour on broken reeds—a wasted shower !
And to make idols, and to find them clay,
And to bewail that worship. Therefore pray !

Her lot is on you—to be found untired,
Watching the stars out by the bed of pain,
With a pale cheek, and yet a brow inspired,
And a true heart of hope, though hope be vain ;
Meekly to bear with wrong, to cheer decay,
And, oh ! to love through all things. Therefore pray !

And take the thought of this calm vesper time,
With its low murmuring sounds and silvery light,
On through the dark days fading from their prime,
As a sweet dew to keep your souls from blight !
Earth will forsake—oh ! happy to have given
Th' unbroken heart's first fragrance unto Heaven.

THE HOUR OF DEATH.

"Il est dans la Nature d'aimer à se livrer à l'idée même qu'on redoute."—
Corinne.

LEAVES have their time to fall,
And flowers to wither at the north-wind's breath,
And stars to set—but all,
Thou hast *all* seasons for thine own, O Death.

Day is for mortal care ;
Eve, for glad meetings round the joyous hearth ;
Night, for the dreams of sleep, the voice of prayer ;—
But all for thee, thou Mightiest of the earth.

The banquet hath its hour,
Its feverish hour, of mirth, and song, and wine ;
There comes a day for grief's o'erwhelming power,
A time for softer tears—but all are thine.

Youth and the opening rose
May look like things too glorious for decay,
And smile at thee—but thou art not of those
That wait the ripen'd bloom to seize their prey.

Leaves have their time to fall,
And flowers to wither at the north-wind's breath,
And stars to set—but all,
Thou hast *all* seasons for thine own, O Death.

The Lost Pleiad.

We know when moons shall wane,
 When summer birds from far shall cross the sea,
 When autumn's hue shall tinge the golden grain—
 But who shall teach us when to look for thee !

Is it when spring's first gale
 Comes forth to whisper where the violets lie ?
 Is it when roses in our paths grow pale ?—
 They have *one* season—*all* are ours to die !

Thou art where billows foam,
 Thou art where music melts upon the air ;
 Thou art around us in our peaceful home,
 And the world calls us forth—and thou art there.

Thou art where friend meets friend,
 Beneath the shadow of the elm to rest—
 Thou art where foe meets foe, and trumpets rend
 The skies, and swords beat down the princely crest.

Leaves have their time to fall,
 And flowers to wither at the north-wind's breath,
 And stars to set—but all,
 Thou hast *all* seasons for thine own, O Death.

THE LOST PLEIAD.

" Like the lost Pleiad, seen no more below."—BYRON.

AND is there glory from the heavens departed ?—
 Oh ! void unmark'd !—thy sisters of the sky
 Still hold their place on high,
 Though from its rank thine orb so long hath started,
 Thou, that no more art seen of mortal eye !

Hath the night lost a gem, the regal night ?
 She wears her crown of old magnificence,
 Though thou art exiled thence—
 No desert seems to part those urns of light,
 'Midst the far depths of purple gloom intense.

They rise in joy, the starry myriads burning—
 The shepherd greets them on his mountains free ;
 And from the silvery sea
 To them the sailor's wakeful eye is turning—
 Unchanged they rise, they have not mourn'd for thee



"Fearfully and mournfully
Thou bidd'st the earth farewell."

[p. 476.]



Couldst thou be shaken from thy radiant place,
E'en as a dew-drop from the myrtle spray,
Swept by the wind away?
Wert thou not peopled by some glorious race,
And was there power to smite them with decay?

Why, who shall talk of thrones, of sceptres riven?—
Bow'd be our hearts to think on what *we* are,
When from its height afar
A world sinks thus—and yon majestic heaven
Shines not the less for that one vanish'd star!

THE CLIFFS OF DOVER.

"The inviolate island of the sage and free."—BYRON.

Rocks of my country! let the cloud
Your crested heights array,
And rise ye like a fortress proud,
Above the surge and spray!

My spirit greets you as ye stand,
Breasting the billow's foam:
Oh! thus for ever guard the land,
The sever'd Land of Home!

I have left rich blue skies behind,
Lighting up classic shrines,
And music in the southern wind,
And sunshine on the vines.

The breathings of the myrtle flowers
Have floated o'er my way;
The pilgrim's voice, at vesper-hours,
Hath soothed me with its lay.

The Isles of Greece, the Hills of Spain,
The purple Heavens of Rome,—
Yes, all are glorious;—yet again,
I bless thee, Land of Home!

For thine the Sabbath peace, my land!
And thine the guarded hearth;
And thine the dead, the noble band,
That make thee holy earth.

The Graves of Martyrs.

Their voices meet me in thy breeze,
 Their steps are on thy plains ;
 Their names, by old majestic trees,
 Are whisper'd round thy fanes.

Their blood hath mingled with the tide
 Of thine exulting sea :
 Oh ! be it still a joy, a pride,
 To live and die for thee !

THE GRAVES OF MARTYRS.

THE kings of old have shrine and tomb,
 In many a minster's haughty gloom ;
 And green, along the ocean side,
 The mounds arise where heroes died ;
 But show me, on thy flowery breast,
 Earth ! where thy *nameless* martyrs rest !

The thousands that, uncheer'd by praise,
 Have made one offering of their days ;
 For Truth, for Heaven, for Freedom's sake,
 Resign'd the bitter cup to take,
 And silently, in fearless faith,
 Bowing their noble souls to death.

Where sleep they, Earth ?—by no proud stone
 Their narrow couch of rest is known ;
 The still sad glory of their name
 Hallows no fountain unto Fame ;
 No—not a tree the record bears
 Of their deep thoughts and lonely prayers.

Yet haply all around lie strew'd
 The ashes of that multitude :
 It may be that each day we tread
 Where thus devoted hearts have bled,
 And the young flowers our children sow
 Take root in holy dust below.

Oh ! that the many rustling leaves,
 Which round our homes the Summer weaves,
 Or that the streams, in whose glad voice
 Our own familiar paths rejoice,
 Might whisper through the starry sky,
 To tell where those blest slumberers lie !

Would not our inmost hearts be still'd,
With knowledge of their presence fill'd,
And by its breathings taught to prize
The meekness of self-sacrifice?—
But the old woods and sounding waves
Are silent of those hidden graves.

Yet what if no light footstep there
In pilgrim-love and awe repair,
So let it be!—Like him, whose clay
Deep buried by his Maker lay,
They sleep in secret,—but their sod,
Unknown to man, is mark'd of God!

THE HOUR OF PRAYER.

“Pregar, pregar, pregar,
Ch' altro ponno i mortali al pianger nati?”—ALFIERI.

CHILD, amidst the flowers at play,
While the red light fades away;
Mother, with thine earnest eye,
Ever following silently;
Father, by the breeze of eve
Call'd thy harvest work to leave;
Pray—ere yet the dark hours be,
Lift the heart and bend the knee!

Traveller, in the stranger's land,
Far from thine own household band;
Mourner, haunted by the tone
Of a voice from this world gone;
Captive, in whose narrow cell
Sunshine hath not leave to dwell;
Sailor, on the darkening sea—
Lift the heart and bend the knee!

Warrior, that from battle won
Breathest now at set of sun;
Woman, o'er the lowly slain
Weeping on his burial plain;
Ye that triumph, ye that sigh,
Kindred by one holy tie,
Heaven's first star alike ye see—
Lift the heart and bend the knee!

THE VOICE OF HOME TO THE PRODIGAL.

" Von Baumen, aus Wellen, aus Mauern,
Wie ruft es dir freundlich und lind ;
Was hast du zu wandern, zu trauern ?
Komm' spielen, du freundliches Kind !"

LA MOTTE FOUQUE.

OH ! when wilt thou return
To thy spirit's early loves ?
To the freshness of the morn,
To the stillness of the groves ?

The summer birds are calling
Thy household porch around,
And the merry waters falling
With a sweet laughter in their sound.

And a thousand bright-vein'd flowers,
From their banks of moss and fern,
Breathe of the sunny hours—
But when wilt thou return ?

Oh ! thou hast wander'd long
From thy home without a guide ;
And thy native woodland song
In thine alter'd heart hath died.

Thou hast flung the wealth away,
And the glory of thy spring ;
And to thee the leaves' light play
Is a long-forgotten thing.

But when wilt thou return !—
Sweet dews may freshen soon
The flower, within whose urn
Too fiercely gazed the noon.

O'er the image of the sky,
Which the lake's clear bosom wore,
Darkly may shadows lie—
But not for evermore.

Give back thy heart again
To the freedom of the woods,
To the birds' triumphant strain,
To the mountain solitudes !

But when wilt thou return ?
Along thine own pure air
There are young sweet voices borne—
Oh ! should not thine be there ?

Still at thy father's board
There is kept a place for thee ;
And by thy smile restored,
Joy round the hearth shall be.

Still hath thy mother's eye,
Thy coming step to greet,
A look of days gone by,
Tender and gravely sweet.

Still, when the prayer is said,
For thee kind bosoms yearn,
For thee fond tears are shed—
Oh ! when wilt thou return ?

THE WAKENING.

How many thousands are wakening now !
Some to the songs from the forest bough,
To the rustling of leaves at the lattice pane,
To the chiming fall of the early rain.

And some, far out on the deep-mid sea,
To the dash of the waves in their foaming glee,
As they break into spray on the ship's tall side,
That holds through the tumult her path of pride.

And some—oh, well may *their* hearts rejoice !—
To the gentle sound of a mother's voice :
Long shall they yearn for that kindly tone,
When from the board and hearth 'tis gone.

And some, in the camp, to the bugle's breath,
And the tramp of the steed on the echoing heath,
And the sudden roar of the hostile gun,
Which tells that a field must ere night be won.

The Breeze from Shore.

And some, in the gloomy convict cell,
 To the dull deep note of the warning bell,
 As it heavily calls them forth to die,
 When the bright sun mounts in the laughing sky.

And some to the peal of the hunter's horn,
 And some to the din from the city borne,
 And some to the rolling of torrent floods,
 Far midst old mountains and solemn woods.

So are we roused on this chequer'd earth :
 Each unto light hath a daily birth ;
 Though fearful or joyous, though sad or sweet,
 Are the voices which first our upspringing meet.

But *one* must the sound be, and *one* the call,
 Which from the dust shall awaken us all :
 One !—but to sever'd and distant dooms,
 How shall the sleepers arise from the tombs ?

THE BREEZE FROM SHORE.

" POETRY reveals to us the loveliness of nature, brings back the freshness of youthful feeling, revives the relish of simple pleasures, keeps unquenched the enthusiasm which warmed the spring-time of our being, refines youthful love, strengthens our interest in human nature, by vivid delineations of its tenderest and loftiest feelings ; and, through the brightness of its prophetic visions, helps faith to lay hold on the future life."—CHANNING.

Joy is upon the lonely seas,
 When Indian forests pour
 Forth, to the billow and the breeze,
 Their odours from the shore ;
 Joy, when the soft air's fanning sigh
 Bears on the breath of Araby.

Oh ! welcome are the winds that tell
 A wanderer of the deep
 Where, far away, the jasmines dwell,
 And where the myrrh-trees weep !
 Blest on the sounding surge and foam
 Are tidings of the citron's home !

The sailor at the helm they meet,
And hope his bosom stirs,
Upspringing, midst the waves, to greet
The fair earth's messengers,
That woo him, from the moaning main,
Back to her glorious bowers again.

They woo him, whispering lovely tales,
Of many a flowering glade,
And fount's bright gleam, in island vales
Of golden-fruited shade :
Across his lone ship's wake they bring
A vision and a glow of spring.

And, O ye masters of the lay !
Come not even thus your songs
That meet us on life's weary way,
Amidst her toiling throngs ?
Yes ! o'er the spirit thus they bear
A current of celestial air.

Their power is from the brighter clime
That in our birth hath part ;
Their tones are of the world, which time
Sears not within the heart :
They tell us of the living light
In its green places ever bright.

They call us, with a voice divine,
Back to our early love, —
Our vows of youth at many a shrine,
Whence far and fast we rove.
Welcome high thought and holy strain
That make us Truth's and Heaven's again !

THE DYING IMPROVISATORE.*

“ My heart shall be pour'd over thee—and break.”—*Prophecy of DANTE.*

THE spirit of my land,
It visits me once more !—though I must die
Far from the myrtles which thy breeze hath fann'd,
My own bright Italy !

* Sestini, the Roman Improvisatore, when on his death-bed at Paris, is said to have poured forth a Farewell to Italy, in his most impassioned poetry.

The Dying Improvisatore.

It is, it is thy breath,
Which stirs my soul e'en yet, as wavering flame
Is shaken by the wind,—in life and death
Still trembling, yet the same !

Oh ! that love's quenchless power
Might waft my voice to fill thy summer sky,
And through thy groves its dying music shower,
Italy ! Italy !

The nightingale is there,
The sunbeams glow, the citron flower's perfume,
The south wind's whisper in the scented air—
It will not pierce the tomb !

Never, oh ! never more,
On thy Rome's purple heaven mine eye shall dwell,
Or watch the bright waves melt along thy shore—
My Italy ! farewell !

Alas !—thy hills among
Had I but left a memory of my name,
Of love and grief one deep, true, fervent song,
Unto immortal fame !

But like a lute's brief tone,
Like a rose-odour on the breezes cast,
Like a swift flush of dayspring, seen and gone,
So hath my spirit pass'd—

Pouring itself away
As a wild bird amidst the foliage turns
That which within him triumphs, beats, or burns,
Into a fleeting lay ;

That swells, and floats, and dies,
Leaving no echo to the summer woods
Of the rich breathings and impassion'd sighs
Which thrill'd their solitudes,

Yet, yet remember me !
Friends ! that upon its murmurs oft have hung
When from my bosom, joyously and free,
The fiery fountain sprung.

Under the dark rich blue
Of midnight heavens, and on the star-lit sea,
And when woods kindle into spring's first hue,
Sweet friends ! remember me !

And in the marble halls,
Where life's full glow the dreams of beauty wear,
And poet-thoughts embodied light the walls,
Let me be with you there !

Fain would I bind, for you,
My memory with all glorious things to dwell !
Fain bid all lovely sounds my name renew—
Sweet friends ! bright land ! farewell !

MUSIC OF YESTERDAY.

"Oh ! mein Geist, ich fühle es in mir, strebt nach etwas Ueberirdischem, das keinem Menschen gegönnt ist."—TIECK.

THE chord, the harp's full chord is hush'd,
The voice hath died away,
Whence music, like sweet waters, gush'd
But yesterday.

Th' awakening note, the breeze-like swell,
The full o'ersweeping tone,
The sounds that sigh'd "Farewell, farewell !"
Are gone—all gone !

The love, whose fervent spirit pass'd
With the rich measure's flow ;
The grief, to which it sank at last—
Where are they now ?

They are with the scents by summer's breath
Borne from a rose now shed :
With the words from lips long seal'd in death—
For ever fled.

The sea-shell of its native deep
A moaning thrill retains ;
But earth and air no record keep
Of parted strains.

And all the memories, all the dreams,
They woke in floating by ;
The tender thoughts, th' Elysian gleams—
Could these too die ?

They died ! As on the water's breast
 The ripple melts away,
 When the breeze that stirr'd it sinks to rest
 So perish'd they !

Mysterious in their sudden birth,
 And mournful in their close,
 Passing, and finding not on earth
 Aim or repose.

Whence were they ?—like the breath of flowers
 Why thus to come and go ?
 A long, long journey must be ours
 Ere this we know !

THE FORSAKEN HEARTH.

“ WAS mir fehlt ?—Mir fehlt ja alles,
 Bin so ganz verlassen hier ! ”

Tyrolese Melody.

THE hearth, the hearth is desolate ! the fire is quench'd and gone
 That into happy children's eyes once brightly laughing shone ;
 The place where mirth and music met is hush'd through day and
 night.

Oh ! for one kind, one sunny face, of all that there made light.

But scatter'd are those pleasant smiles afar by mount and shore,
 Like gleaming waters from one spring dispersed to meet no more.
 Those kindred eyes reflect not now each other's joy or mirth,
 Unbound is that sweet wreath of home—alas ! the lonely hearth !

The voices that have mingled here now speak another tongue,
 Or breathe, perchance, to alien ears the songs their mother sung.
 Sad, strangely sad, in stranger lands, must sound each household
 tone :

The hearth, the hearth is desolate ! the bright fire quench'd and
 gone !

But *are* they speaking, singing yet, as in their days of glee ?
 Those voices, are they lovely still, still sweet on earth or sea ?
 Oh ! some are hush'd, and some are changed, and never shall one
 strain

Blend their fraternal cadences triumphantly again.

And of the hearts that here were link'd by long-remember'd year,
Alas ! the brother knows not now when fall the sister's tears !
One haply revels at the feast, while one may droop alone :
For broken is the household chain, the bright fire quench'd and gone !

Not so—'tis *not* a broken chain : thy memory binds them still,
Thou holy hearth of other days ! though silent now and chill.
The smiles, the tears, the rites, beheld by thine attesting stone,
Have yet a living power to mark thy children for thine own.

The father's voice, the mother's prayer, though call'd from earth
away,
With music rising from the dead, their spirits yet shall sway ;
And by the past, and by the grave, the parted yet are one,
Though the loved hearth be desolate, the bright fire quench'd and gone !

THE DREAMER.

"THERE is no such thing as forgetting, possible to the mind ; a thousand accidents may, and will, interpose a veil between our present consciousness and the secret inscription on the mind ; but alike, whether veiled or unveiled, the inscription remains for ever."—*English Opium-eater.*

"Thou hast been call'd, O sleep, the friend of woe,
But 'tis the happy who have call'd thee so."—SOUTHEY.

PEACE to thy dreams ! thou art slumbering now—
The moonlight's calm is upon thy brow ;
All the deep love that o'erflows thy breast
Lies midst the hush of thy heart at rest—
Like the scent of a flower in its folded bell,
When eve through the woodlands hath sigh'd farewell.

Peace ! The sad memories that through the day
With a weight on thy lonely bosom lay,
The sudden thoughts of the changed and dead,
That bow'd thee as winds bow the willow's head,
The yearnings for faces and voices gone—
All are forgotten ! Sleep on, sleep on !

Are they forgotten ? It is not so !
Slumber divides not the heart from its woe.

E'en now o'er thine aspect swift changes pass,
 Like lights and shades over wavy grass :
 Tremblest thou, Dreamer? O love and grief!
 Ye have storms that shake e'en the closed-up leaf !

On thy parted lips there's a quivering thrill,
 As on a lyre ere its chords are still ;
 On the long silk lashes that fringe thine eye,
 There's a large tear gathering heavily—
 A rain from the clouds of thy spirit press'd :
 Sorrowful Dreamer ! this is not rest !

It is Thought at work amidst buried hours—
 It is Love keeping vigil o'er perish'd flowers.
 Oh, we bear within us mysterious things !
 Of Memory and Anguish, unfathom'd springs ;
 And Passion—those gulfs of the heart to fill
 With bitter waves, which it ne'er may still.

Well might we pause ere we gave them sway,
 Flinging the peace of our couch away !
 Well might we look on our souls in fear—
 They find no fount of oblivion here !
 They forget not, the mantle of sleep beneath—
 How know we if under the wings of death?

THE WINGS OF THE DOVE.

"OH ! that I had wings like a dove, for then would I fly away and be at rest."
Psalm lv.

OH ! for thy wings, thou dove !
 Now sailing by with sunshine on thy breast ;
 That, borne like thee above,
 I too might flee away, and be at rest !

Where wilt thou fold those plumes,
 Bird of the forest-shadows, holiest bird ?
 In what rich leafy glooms,
 By the sweet voice of hidden waters stirr'd ?

Over what blessed home,
 What roof with dark, deep, summer foliage crown'd,
 O fair as ocean's foam !
 Shall thy bright bosom shed a gleam around ?

Or'seek'st thou some old shrine
Of nymph or saint, no more by votary woo'd,
Though still, as if divine,
Breathing a spirit o'er the solitude ?

Yet wherefore ask thy way ?
Blest, everblest, whate'er its aim, thou art !
Unto the greenwood spray,
Bearing no dark remembrance at thy heart !

No echoes that will blend
A sadness with the whispers of the grove ;
No memory of a friend
Far off, or dead, or changed to thee, thou dove !

Oh ! to some cool recess
Take, take me with thee on the summer wind,
Leaving the weariness
And all the fever of this life behind :

The aching and the void
Within the heart whereunto none reply,
The young bright hopes destroy'd—
Bird ! bear me with thee through the sunny sky !

Wild wish, and longing vain,
And brief upspringing to be glad and free !
Go to thy woodland reign !
My soul is bound and held—I may not flee.

For even by all the fears
And thoughts that haunt my dreams—untold, unknown,
And burning woman's tears,
Pour'd from mine eyes in silence and alone ;

Had I thy wings, thou dove !
High midst the gorgeous Isles of Cloud to soar,
Soon the strong cords of love
Would draw me earthwards—homewards—yet once more

PSYCHE BORNE BY ZEPHYRS TO THE
ISLAND OF PLEASURE.*

"SOUVENT l'âme, fortifiée par la contemplation des choses divines, voudroit déployer ses ailes vers le ciel. Elle croit qu'au terme de sa carrière un rideau va se lever pour lui découvrir des scènes de lumière ; mais quand la mort touche son corps périssable, elle jette un regard en arrière vers les plaisirs terrestres et vers ses compagnes mortelles."—SCHLEGEL.

Translated by MADAME DE STAEL.

FEARFULLY and mournfully
Thou bidd'st the earth farewell,
And yet thou'rt passing, loveliest one !
In a brighter land to dwell.

Ascend, ascend rejoicing !
The sunshine of that shore
Around thee, as a glorious robe,
Shall stream for evermore.

The breezy music wandering
There through th' Elysian sky,
Hath no deep tone that seems to float
From a happier time gone by :

And there the day's last crimson
Gives no sad memories birth,
No thought of dead or distant friends,
Or partings—as on earth.

Yet fearfully and mournfully
Thou bidd'st that earth farewell,
Although thou'rt passing, loveliest one !
In a brighter land to dwell.

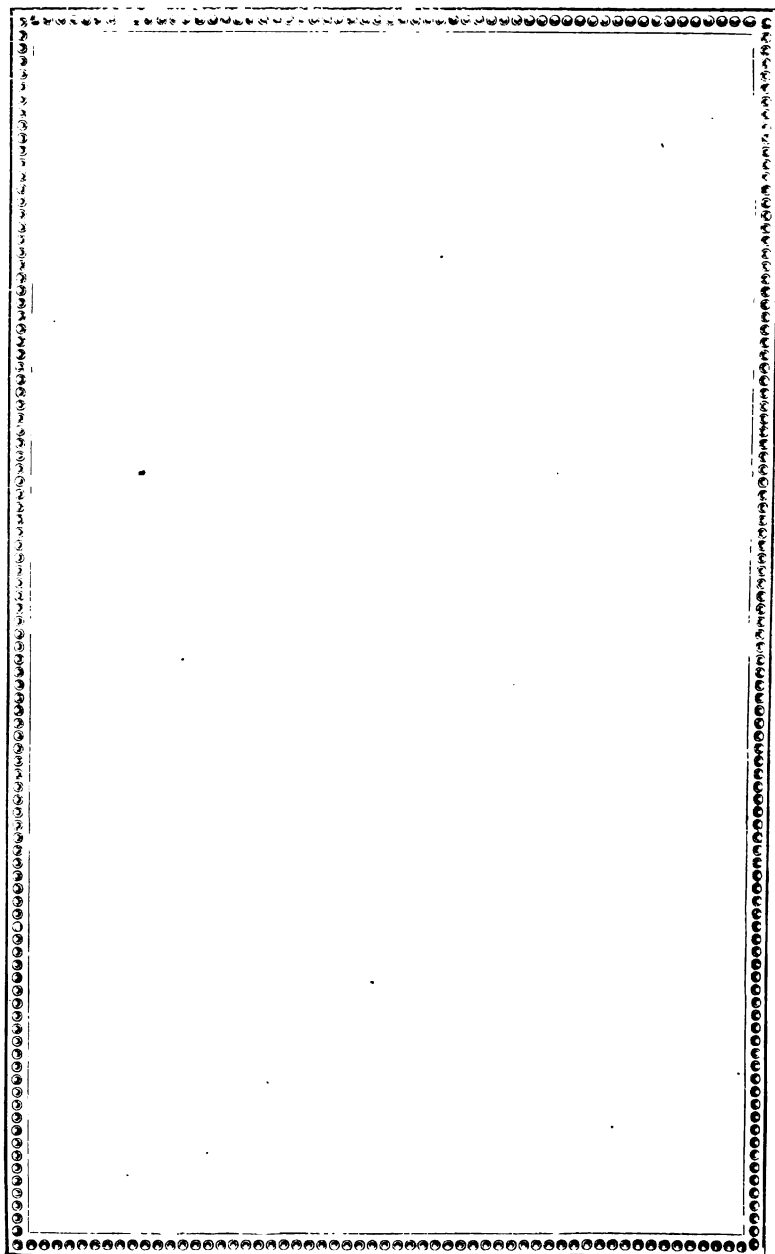
A land where all is deathless—
The sunny wave's repose,
The wood with its rich melodies,
The summer and its rose.

* Written for a picture in which Psyche, on her flight upwards, is represented looking back sadly and anxiously to the earth.



"She turned to his followers—'Your lord is there!'"

[p. 494.]



A land that sees no parting,
That hears no sound of sighs,
That waits thee with immortal air—
Lift, lift those anxious eyes !

Oh ! how like *thee*, thou trembler !
Man's spirit fondly clings
With timid love, to this, its world
Of old familiar things !

We pant, we thirst for fountains
That gush not here below !
On, on we toil, allured by dreams
Of the living water's flow :

We pine for kindred natures
To mingle with our own ;
For communings more full and high
Than aught by mortal known :

We strive with brief aspirings
Against our bounds in vain ;
Yet summon'd to be free at last,
We shrink—and clasp our chain !

And fearfully and mournfully
We bid the earth farewell,
Though passing from its mists, like thee,
In a brighter world to dwell.

THE BOON OF MEMORY.

"Many things answered me."—*Manfred.*

I go, I go !—and must mine image fade,
From the green spots wherein my childhood play'd,
By my own streams ?
Must my life part from each familiar place,
As a bird's song, that leaves the woods no trace
Of its lone themes ?

Will the friend pass my dwelling, and forget
The welcomes there, the hours when we have met
In grief or glee ?

All the sweet counsel, the communion high,
The kindly words of trust, in days gone by,
Pour'd full and free?

A boon, a talisman, O Memory! give,
To shrine my name in hearts where I would live
For evermore!
Bid the wind speak of me where I have dwelt,
Bid the stream's voice, of all my soul hath felt,
A thought restore!

In the rich rose, whose bloom I loved so well,
In the dim brooding violet of the dell,
Set deep that thought!
And let the sunset's melancholy glow,
And let the spring's first whisper, faint and low,
With me be fraught!

And Memory answer'd me :—" Wild wish and vain!
I have no hues the loveliest to detain
In the heart's core.
The place they held in bosoms all their own,
Soon with new shadows fill'd, new flowers o'ergrown,
Is theirs no more."

Hast *thou* such power, O Love?—And Love replied,
" It is not mine! Pour out thy soul's full tide
Of hope and trust,
Prayer, tear, devotedness, that boon to gain—
'Tis but to write, with the heart's fiery rain,
Wild words on dust!"

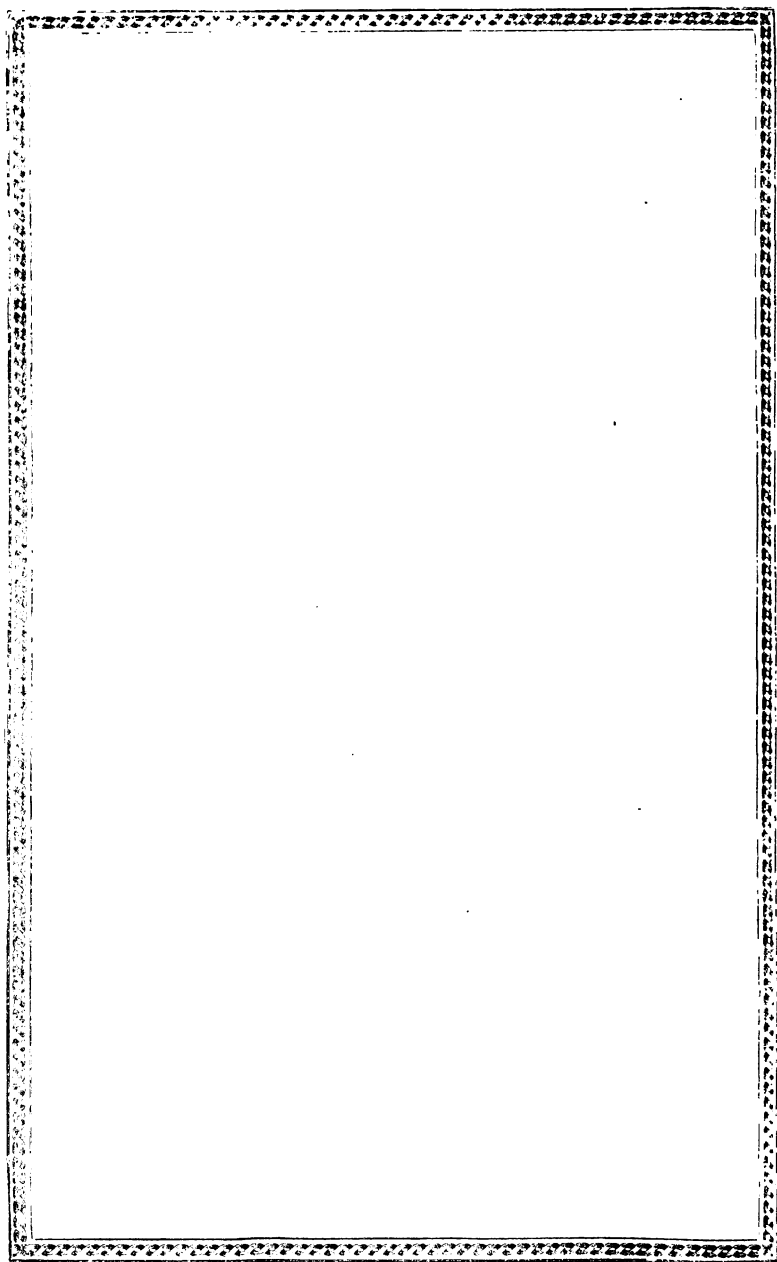
Song, is the gift with thee?—I ask a lay,
Soft, fervent, deep, that will not pass away
From the still breast;
Fill'd with a tone—oh! not for deathless fame,
But a sweet haunting murmur of my name,
Where it would rest.

And Song made answer—" It is not in me,
Though call'd immortal; though my gifts may be
All but divine.
A place of lonely brightness I can give;—
A changeless one, where thou with Love wouldst live—
This is not mine!"

Death, Death ! wilt *thou* the restless wish fulfil ?
And Death, the Strong One, spoke :—" I can but still
Each vain regret.
What if forgotten?—All thy soul would crave,
Thou too, within the mantle of the grave,
Wilt soon forget."

Then did my heart in lone faint sadness die,
As from all nature's voices one reply,
But one, was given :—
" Earth has *no* heart, fond dreamer ! with a tone
To send thee back the spirit of thine own—
Seek it in Heaven."







SONGS OF THE AFFECTIONS.

A SPIRIT'S RETURN.

"This is to be a mortal,
And seek the things beyond mortality."—*Manfred*.

THY voice prevails ; dear Friend, my gentle Friend !
This long-shut heart for thee shall be unseal'd,
And though thy soft eye mournfully will bend
Over the troubled stream, yet once reveal'd
Shall its freed waters flow ; then rocks must close
For evermore, above their dark repose.

Come while the gorgeous mysteries of the sky
Fused in the crimson sea of sunset lie ;
Come to the woods, where all strange wandering sound
Is mingled into harmony profound ;
Where the leaves thrill with spirit, while the wind
Fills with a viewless being, unconfined,
The trembling reeds and fountains ;—Our own dell,
With its green dimness and Æolian breath,
Shall suit th' unveiling of dark records well—
Hear me in tenderness and silent faith !

Thou knew'st me not in life's fresh vernal noon—
I would thou hadst !—for then my heart on thine
Had pour'd a worthier love ; now, all o'erworn
By its deep thirst for something too divine,
It hath but fitful music to bestow,
Echoes of harp-strings, broken long ago.

Yet even in youth companionless I stood,
As a lone forest-bird midst ocean's foam ;

For me the silver cords of brotherhood
Were early loosed ;—the voices from my home
Pass'd one by one, and Melody and Mirth
Left me a dreamer by a silent hearth.

But, with the fulness of a heart that burn'd
For the deep sympathies of mind, I turn'd
From that unanswering spot, and fondly sought
In all wild scenes with thrilling murmurs fraught,
In every still small voice and sound of power,
And flute-note of the wind through cave and bower,
A perilous delight ! for then first woke
My life's lone passion, the mysterious quest
Of secret knowledge ; and each tone that broke
From the wood-arches or the fountain's breast,
Making my quick soul vibrate as a lyre,
But minister'd to that strange inborn fire.

Midst the bright silence of the mountain-dells,
In noontide-hours or golden summer-eves,
My thoughts have burst forth as a gale that swells
Into a rushing blast, and from the leaves
Shakes out response ;—O thou rich world unseen !
Thou curtain'd realm of spirits !—thus my cry
Hath troubled air and silence—dost thou lie
Spread all around, yet by some filmy screen
Shut from us ever ?—The resounding woods,
Do their depths teem with marvels ?—and the floods,
And the pure fountains, leading secret veins
Of quenchless melody through rock and hill,
Have they bright dwellers ?—are their lone domains
Peopled with beauty, which may never still
Our weary thirst of soul ?—Cold, weak and cold,
Is Earth's vain language, piercing not one fold
Of our deep being !—Oh, for gifts more high !
For a seer's glance to rend mortality !
For a charm'd rod, to call from each dark shrine,
The oracles divine !

I woke from those high fantasies, to know
My kindred with the Earth—I woke to love :—
Oh, gentle Friend ! to love in doubt and woe,
Shutting the heart the worshipp'd name above,
Is to love deeply—and *my* spirit's bower
Was a sad gift, a melancholy power
Of so adoring ;—with a buried care,
And with the o'erflowing of a voiceless prayer,

and with a deepening dream, that day by day,
In the still shadow of its lonely sway,
Folded me closer ;—till the world held nought
Save the *one* Being to my centred thought.
There was no music but his voice to hear,
No joy but such as with *his* step drew near ;
Light was but where he look'd—life where he moved—
Silently, fervently, thus, thus I loved.
Oh ! but such love is fearful !—and I knew
Its gathering doom :—the soul's prophetic sight
Even then unfolded in my breast, and threw
O'er all things round a full, strong, vivid light,
Too sorrowfully clear !—an under-tone
Was given to Nature's harp, for me alone
Whispering of grief.—Of grief ?—be strong, awake !
Hath not thy love been victory, O my soul ?
Hath not its conflict won a voice to shake
Death's fastnesses ?—a magic to control
Worlds far removed ?—from o'er the grave to thee
Love hath made answer ; and *thy* tale should be
Sung like a lay of triumph !—Now return,
And take thy treasure from its bosom'd urn,
And lift it once to light !

In fear, in pain,
I said I loved—but yet a heavenly strain
Of sweetness floated down the tearful stream,
A joy flash'd through the trouble of my dream !
I knew myself beloved !—we breathed no vow,
No mingling visions might our fate allow,
As unto happy hearts ; but still and deep,
Like a rich jewel gleaming in a grave,
Like golden sand in some dark river's wave,
So did my soul that costly knowledge keep
So jealously !—a thing o'er which to shed,
When stars alone beheld the drooping head,
Lone tears ! yet oftentimes burden'd with the excess
Of our strange nature's quivering happiness.

But, oh ! sweet Friend ! we dream not of love's might
Till Death has robed with soft and solemn light
The image we enshrined—Before *that* hour,
We have but glimpses of the o'er-mastering power
Within us laid !—*then* doth the spirit-flame
With sword-like lightning rend its mortal frame ;
The wings of that which pants to follow fast
Shake their clay-bars, as with a prison'd blast,—
The sea is in our souls !

He died, *he* died,
 On whom my lone devotedness was cast !
 I might not keep one vigil by his side,
I, whose wrung heart watch'd with him to the last !
 I might not once his fainting head sustain,
 Nor bathe his parch'd lips in the hour of pain,
 Nor say to him, " Farewell !"—He pass'd away—
 Oh ! had *my* love been there, its conquering sway
 Had won him back from death !—but thus removed,
 Borne o'er the abyss no sounding-line hath proved,
 Join'd with the unknown, the viewless,—he became
 Unto my thoughts another, yet the same—
 Changed—hallow'd—glorified !—and his low grave
 Seem'd a bright mournful altar—mine, all mine :—
 Brother and Friend soon left me *that* sole shrine,
 The birthright of the Faithful !—*their* world's wave
 Soon swept them from its brink.—Oh ! deem thou not
 That on the sad and consecrated spot
 My soul grew weak !—I tell thee that a power
 There kindled heart and lip ;—a fiery shower
 My words were made ;—a might was given to prayer,
 And a strong grasp to passionate despair,
 And a dread triumph !—Know'st thou what I sought ?
 For what high boon my struggling spirit wrought ?—
 Communion with the dead !—I sent a cry,
 Through the veil'd empires of eternity,
 A voice to cleave them ! By the mournful truth,
 By the lost promise of my blighted youth,
 By the strong chain a mighty love can bind
 On the beloved, the spell of mind o'er mind ;
 By words, which in themselves are magic high,
 Arm'd, and inspired, and wing'd with agony ;
 By tears, which comfort not, but burn, and seem
 To bear the heart's blood in their passion-stream ;
 I summon'd, I adjur'd !—with quicken'd sense,
 With the keen vigil of a life intense,
 I watch'd, an answer from the winds to wring,
 I listen'd, if perchance the stream might bring
 Token from worlds afar : I taught *one* sound
 Unto a thousand echoes ; one profound
 Imploring accent to the tomb, the sky ;
 One prayer to night,—“Awake, appear, reply !”

Hast thou been told that from the viewless bourne,
 The dark way never hath allow'd return ?
 That all, which tears can move, with life is fled,
 That earthly love is powerless on the dead ?

Believe it not !—there is a large lone star,
Now burning o'er yon western hill afar,
And under its clear light there lies a spot,
Which well might utter forth—Believe it not !

I sat beneath that planet,—I had wept
My woe to stillness ; every night-wind slept ;
A hush was on the hills ; the very streams
Went by like clouds, or noiseless founts in dreams,
And the dark tree o'ershadowing me that hour,
Stood motionless, even as the grey church-tower
Whereon I gazed unconsciously :—there came
A low sound, like the tremor of a flame,
Or like the light quick shiver of a wing,
Flitting through twilight woods, across the air ;
And I look'd up !—Oh ! for strong words to bring
Conviction o'er thy thought !—Before me there,
He, the Departed, stood !—Ay, face to face—
So near, and yet how far !—his form, his mien,
Gave to remembrance back each burning trace
Within :—Yet something awfully serene,
Pure,—sculpture-like,—on the pale brow, that wore
Of the once beating heart no token more ;
And stillness on the lip—and o'er the hair
A gleam, that trembled through the breathless air ;
And an unfathom'd calm, that seem'd to lie
In the grave sweetness of the illumined eye ;
Told of the gulfs between our being set,
And, as that unsheathed spirit-glance I met,
Made my soul faint :—with *fear* !—Oh ! *not* with fear !
With the sick feeling that in *his* far sphere
My love could be as nothing !—But he spoke—
How shall I tell thee of the startling thrill
In that low voice, whose breezy tones could fill
My bosom's infinite ?—O Friend, I woke
Then first to heavenly life !—Soft, solemn, clear,
Breathed the mysterious accents on mine ear,
Yet strangely seem'd as if the while they rose
From depths of distance, o'er the wide repose
Of slumbering waters wafted, or the dells
Of mountains, hollow with sweet echo-cells ;
But, as they murmur'd on, the mortal chill
Pass'd from me, like a mist before the morn,
And, to that glorious intercourse upborne,
By slow degrees, a calm, divinely still,
Possess'd my frame :—I sought that lighted eye,—
From its intense and searching purity

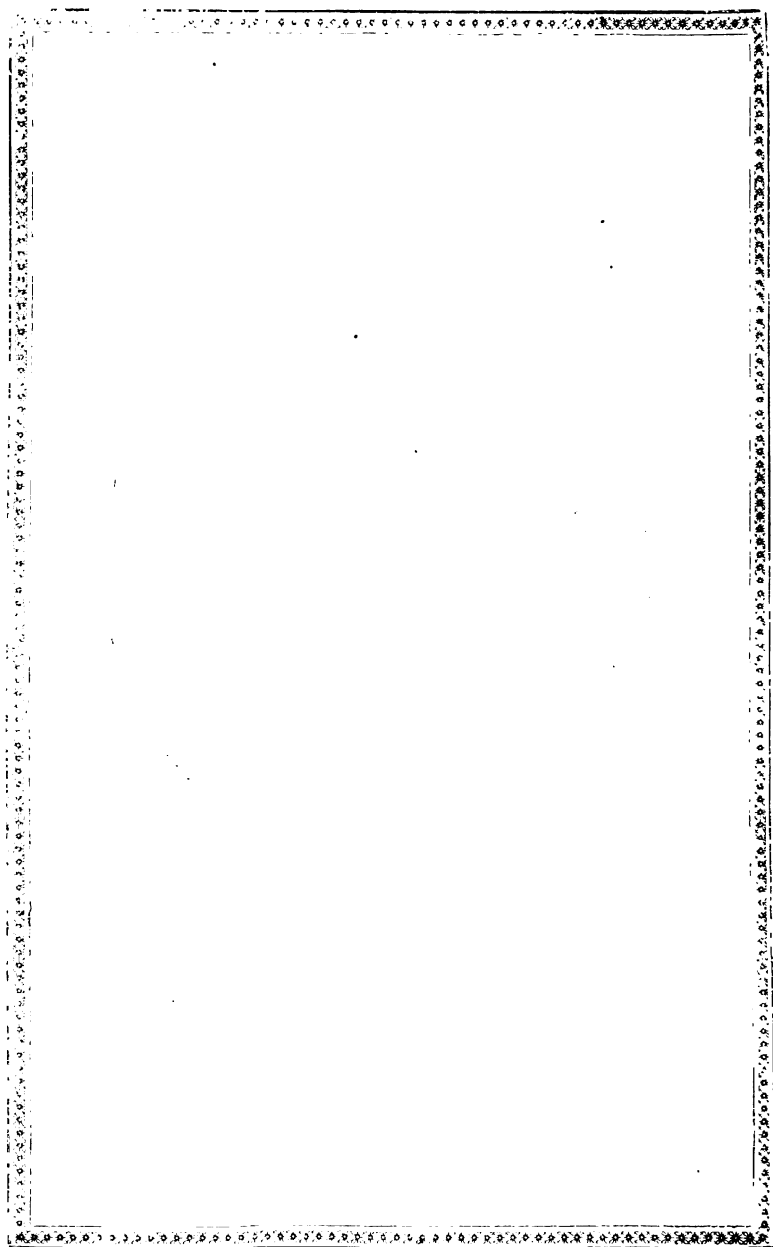
I drank in *soul*!—I question'd of the dead—
 Of the hush'd, starry shores their footsteps tread—
 And I was answer'd :—if remembrance there,
 With dreamy whispers fill the immortal air ;
 If Thought, here piled from many a jewel-heap,
 Be treasure in that pensive land to keep ;
 If Love, o'ersweeping change, and blight, and blast,
 Find *there* the music of his home at last ;
 I ask'd, and I was answer'd :—Full and high
 Was that communion with eternity,
 Too rich for aught so fleeting !—Like a knell
 Swept o'er my sense its closing words,—“Farewell,
 On earth we meet no more !”—and all was gone—
 The pale bright settled brow—the thrilling tone—
 The still and shining eye !—and never more
 May twilight gloom or midnight hush restore
 That radiant guest !—One full-fraught hour of Heaven
 To earthly passion's wild implorings given,
 Was made my own—the ethereal fire hath shiver'd
 The fragile censer in whose mould it quiver'd,
 Brightly, consumingly !—What now is left ?—
 A faded world, of glory's hues bereft,
 A void, a chain !—I dwell, 'midst throngs, apart,
 In the cold silence of the stranger's heart ;
 A fix'd, immortal shadow stands between
 My spirit and life's fast-receding scene ;
 A gift hath sever'd me from human ties,
 A power is gone from all earth's melodies,
 Which never may return :—their chords are broken—
 The music of another land hath spoken,—
 No after-sound is sweet !—this weary thirst !—
 And I have heard celestial fountains burst !—
 What *here* shall quench it ?

Dost thou not rejoice,
 When the spring sends forth an awakening voice
 Through the young woods ?—Thou dost !—And in that birth
 Of early leaves, and flowers, and songs of mirth,
 Thousands, like thee, find gladness !—Couldst thou know
 How every breeze then summons *me* to go !
 How all the light of love and beauty shed
 By those rich hours, but woos me to the Dead !
 The *only* beautiful that change no more,
 The only loved !—the dwellers on the shore
 Of spring fulfill'd !—The Dead !—*whom* call we so ?
 They that breathe purer air, that feel, that know
 Things wrapt from us !—Away !—within me pent,
 That which is barr'd from its own element



"Mother of Sorrows! lo, I come to thee."

[P. 499.]



Still droops or struggles !—But the day *will* come—
Over the deep the free bird finds its home,
And the stream lingers 'midst the rocks, yet greets
The sea at last ; and the wing'd flower-seed meets
A soil to rest in :—shall not I, too, be,
My spirit-love ! upborne to dwell with thee ?
Yes ! by the power whose conquering anguish stirr'd
The tomb, whose cry beyond the stars was heard,
Whose agony of triumph won thee back
Through the dim pass no mortal step may track,
Yet shall we meet !—that glimpse of joy divine,
Proved thee for ever and for ever mine !

THE LADY OF PROVENCE.*

“ COURAGE was cast about her like a dress
Of solemn comeliness,
A gather'd mind and an untroubled face
Did give her dangers grace.”

DONNE.

THE war-note of the Saracen
Was on the winds of France ;
It had still'd the harp of the Troubadour,
And the clash of the tourney's lance.

The sounds of the sea, and the sounds of the night,
And the hollow echoes of charge and flight,
Were around Clotilde, as she knelt to pray
In a chapel where the mighty lay,
On the old Provençal shore ;

Many a Chatillon beneath,
Unstirr'd by the ringing trumpet's breath,
His shroud of armour wore.

And the glimpses of moonlight that went and came
Through the clouds, like bursts of a dying flame,
Gave quivering life to the slumber pale
Of stern forms couch'd in their marble mail,
At rest on the tombs of the knightly race,
The silent throngs of that burial-place.

They were imaged there with helm and spear,
As leaders in many a bold career,

* Founded on an incident in the early French history.

And haughty their stillness look'd and high,
 Like a sleep whose dreams were of victory;
 But meekly the voice of the lady rose
 Through the trophies of their proud repose;
 Meekly, yet fervently, calling down aid,
 Under their banners of battle she pray'd;
 With her pale fair brow, and her eyes of love,
 Upraised to the Virgin's portray'd above,
 And her hair flung back, till it swept the grave
 Of a Chatillon with its gleamy wave.
 And her fragile frame, at every blast,
 That full of the savage war-horn pass'd,
 Trembling, as trembles a bird's quick heart,
 When it vainly strives from its cage to part,—
 So knelt she in her woe;
 A weeper alone with the tearless dead—
 Oh! they reck not of tears o'er their quiet shed,
 Or the dust had stirr'd below!

Hark! a swift step! she hath caught its tone,
 Through the dash of the sea, through the wild wind's
 moan;—
 Is her lord return'd with his conquering bands?
 No! a breathless vassal before her stands!—
 "Hast thou been on the field?—Art thou come from
 the host?"—
 "From the slaughter, Lady!—All, all is lost!
 Our banners are taken, our knights laid low,
 Our spearmen chased by the Paynim foe,
 And thy Lord," his voice took a sadder sound—
 "Thy Lord—he is not on the bloody ground!
 There are those who tell that the leader's plume
 Was seen on the flight through the gathering gloom."—

A change o'er her mien and her spirit past!
 She ruled the heart which had beat so fast,
 She dash'd the tears from her kindling eye,
 With a glance, as of sudden royalty:
 The proud blood sprang in a fiery flow,
 Quick o'er bosom, and cheek, and brow,
 And her young voice rose till the peasant shook
 At the thrilling tone and the falcon-look:—
 "Dost thou stand by the tombs of the glorious dead.
 And fear not to say, that their son hath fled?—
 Away! he is lying by lance and shield,—
 Point me the path to his battle-field!"

The shadows of the forest
Are about the lady now ;
She is hurrying through the midnight on,
Beneath the dark pine bough.

There's a murmur of omens in every leaf,
There's a wail in the stream like the dirge of a chief ;
The branches that rock to the tempest-strife,
Are groaning like things of troubled life ;
The wind from the battle seems rushing by
With a funeral march through the gloomy sky ;
The pathway is rugged, and wild, and long,
But her frame in the daring of love is strong,
And her soul as on swelling seas upborne,
And girded all fearful things to scorn.

And fearful things were around her spread,
When she reach'd the field of the warrior-dead ;
There lay the noble, the valiant, low—
Ay ! but *one* word speaks of deeper woe ;
There lay the *loved*—on each fallen head
Mothers vain blessings and tears had shed ;
Sisters were watching in many a home
For the fetter'd footstep, no more to come ;
Names in the prayer of that night were spoken,
Whose claim unto kindred prayer was broken ;
And the fire was heap'd, and the bright wine pour'd,
For those, now needing nor hearth nor board ;
Only a requiem, a shroud, a knell,
And oh ! ye beloved of women, farewell !

Silently, with lips compress'd,
Pale hands clasp'd above her breast,
Stately brow of anguish high,
Deathlike cheek, but dauntless eye ;
Silently, o'er that red plain,
Moved the lady 'midst the slain.

Sometimes it seem'd as a charging cry,
Or the ringing tramp of a steed, came nigh ;
Sometimes a blast of the Paynim horn,
Sudden and shrill from the mountains borne ;
And her maidens trembled ;—but on *her* ear
No meaning fell with her sounds of fear ;
They had less of mastery to shake her now,
Than the quivering, erewhile, of an aspen bough.

She search'd into many an unclosed eye,
That look'd, without soul, to the starry sky;
She bow'd down o'er many a shatter'd breast,
She lifted up helmet and cloven crest—

Not there, not there he lay!

"Lead where the most hath been dared and done,
Where the heart of the battle hath bled,—lead on!"

And the vassal took the way.

He turn'd to a dark and lonely tree
That waved o'er a fountain red;
Oh! swiftest *there* had the currents free
From noble veins been shed.

Thickest there the spear-heads gleam'd,
And the scatter'd plumage steam'd,
And the broken shields were toss'd,
And the shiver'd lances cross'd,
And the mail-clad sleepers round
Made the harvest of that ground.

He was there! the leader amidst his band,
Where the faithful had made their last vain stand;
He was there! but affection's glance alone
The darkly-changed in that hour had known;
With the falchion yet in his cold hand grasp'd,
And a banner of France to his bosom clasp'd,
And the form that of conflict bore fearful trace,
And the face—oh! speak not of that dead face!
As it lay to answer love's look no more,
Yet never so proudly loved before!
She quell'd in her soul the deep floods of woe,
The time was not yet for their waves to flow;
She felt the full presence, the might of death,
Yet there came no sob with her struggling breath,
And a proud smile shone o'er her pale despair,
As she turn'd to his followers—"Your Lord is there!
Look on him! know him by scarf and crest!—
Bear him away with his sires to rest!"

Another day—another night—
And the sailor on the deep
Hears the low chant of a funeral rite
From the lordly chapel sweep:

It comes with a broken and muffled tone,
As if that rite were in terror done;

Yet the song 'midst the seas hath a thrilling power,
And he knows 'tis a chieftain's burial-hour.

Hurriedly, in fear and woe,
Through the aisle the mourners go ;
With a hush'd and stealthy tread,
Bearing on the noble dead,
Sheath'd in armour of the field—
Only his wan face reveal'd.
Whence the still and solemn gleam
Doth a strange sad contrast seem
To the anxious eyes of that pale band,
With torches wavering in every hand,
For they dread each moment the shout of war,
And the burst of the Moslem scimitar.

There is no plumed head o'er the bier to bend,
No brother of battle, no princely friend ;
No sound comes back like the sounds of yore,
Unto sweeping swords from the marble floor ;
By the red fountain the valiant lie,
The flower of Provençal chivalry ;
But *one* free step, and one lofty heart,
Bear through that scene, to the last, their part.

She hath led the death-train of the brave
To the verge of his own ancestral grave ;
She hath held o'er her spirit long rigid sway,
But the struggling passion must now have way.
In the cheek, half seen through her mourning veil,
By turns does the swift blood flush and fail ;
The pride on the lip is lingering still,
But it shakes as a flame to the blast might thrill ;
Anguish and Triumph are met at strife,
Rending the chords of her frail young life
And she sinks at last on her warrior's bier,
Lifting her voice, as if Death might hear.—

"I have won thy fame from the breath of wrong,
My soul hath risen for thy glory strong !
Now call me hence, by thy side to be,
The world thou leav'st has no place for me.
The light goes with thee, the joy, the worth—
Faithful and tender ! Oh ! call me forth !
Give me my home on thy noble heart,—
Well have we loved, let us both depart !"—

And pale on the breast of the Dead she lay,
 The living cheek to the cheek of clay ;
 The *living* cheek !—Oh ! it was not vain,
 That strife of the spirit to rend its chain ;
 She is there at rest in her place of pride,
 In death how queen-like—a glorious bride !

Joy for the freed One !—she might not stay
 When the crown had fallen from her life away ;
 She might not linger—a weary thing,
 A dove, with no home for its broken wing,
 Thrown on the harshness of alien skies,
 That know not its own land's melodies.
 From the long heart-withering early gone ;
 She hath lived—she hath loved—her task is done .

THE CORONATION OF INEZ DE CASTRO.

"TABLEAU, où l'Amour fait alliance avec la Tombe ; union redoutable de la mort et de la vie !"—MADAME DE STAËL.

THERE was music on the midnight ;—
 From a royal fane it roll'd,
 And a mighty bell, each pause between,
 Sternly and slowly toll'd.
 Strange was their mingling in the sky,
 It hush'd the listener's breath ;
 For the music spoke of triumph high,
 The lonely bell, of death.

There was hurrying through the midnight—
 A sound of many feet ;
 But they fell with a muffled fearfulness,
 Along the shadowy street :
 And softer, fainter, grew their tread,
 As it near'd the minster-gate,
 Whence a broad and solemn light was shed
 From a scene of royal state.

Full glow'd the strong red radiance,
 In the centre of the nave,
 Where the folds of a purple canopy
 Swept down in many a wave ;

Loading the marble pavement old
With a weight of gorgeous gloom;
For something lay 'midst their fretted gold,
Like a shadow of the tomb.

And within that rich pavilion,
High on a glittering throne,
A woman's form sat silently,
'Midst the glare of light alone.
Her jewell'd robes fell strangely still—
The drapery on her breast
Seem'd with no pulse beneath to thrill,
So stonelike was its rest !

But a peal of lordly music
Shook e'en the dust below,
When the burning gold of the diadem
Was set on her pallid brow !
Then died away that haughty sound,
And from the encircling band
Stepp'd Prince and Chief, 'midst the hush profound,
With homage to her hand.

Why pass'd a faint, cold shuddering
Over each martial frame,
As one by one, to touch that hand,
Noble and leader came ?
Was not the settled aspect fair ?
Did not a queenly grace,
Under the parted ebon hair,
Sit on the pale still face ?

Death ! Death ! canst *thou* be lovely
Unto the eye of life ?
Is not each pulse of the quick high breast
With thy cold mien at strife ?—
It was a strange and fearful sight,
The crown upon that head,
The glorious robes, and the blaze of light,
All gather'd round the Dead !

And beside her stood in silence
One with a brow as pale,
And white lips rigidly compress'd,
Lest the strong heart should fail :

K K

The Coronation of Inez de Castro.

King Pedro, with a jealous eye,
Watching the homage done,
By the land's flower and chivalry,
To her, his martyr'd one.

But on the face he look'd not,
Which once his star had been ;
To every form his glance was turn'd,
Save of the breathless queen :
Though something, won from the grave's embrace
Of her beauty still was there,
Its hues were all of that shadowy place,
It was not for *him* to bear.

Alas ! the crown, the sceptre,
The treasures of the earth,
And the priceless love that pour'd those gifts,
Alike of wasted worth !
The rites are closed :—bear back the Dead
Unto the chamber deep !
Lay down again the royal head,
Dust with the dust to sleep !

There is music on the midnight—
A requiem sad and slow,
As the mourners through the sounding aisle
In dark procession go ;
And the ring of state, and the starry crown,
And all the rich array,
Are borne to the house of silence down,
With her, that queen of clay !

And tearlessly and firmly
King Pedro led the train,—
But his face was wrapt in his folding robe,
When they lower'd the dust again.
'Tis hush'd at last the tomb above,
Hymns die, and steps depart :
Who call'd thee strong as Death, O Love ?
Mightier thou wast and art.

ITALIAN GIRL'S HYMN TO THE VIRGIN.

"O SANCTISSIMA, O purissima !
Dulcis Virgo Maria,
Mater amata, intemerata,
Ora, ora pro nobis."

Sicilian Mariner's Hymn.

IN the deep hour of dreams,
Through the dark woods, and past the moaning sea,
And by the starlight gleams,
Mother of Sorrows ! lo, I come to thee.

Unto thy shrine I bear
Night-blowing flowers, like my own heart, to lie
All, all unfolded there,
Beneath the meekness of thy pitying eye.

For thou, that once didst move,
In thy still beauty, through an early home,
Thou know'st the grief, the love,
The fear of woman's soul ;—to thee I come !

Many, and sad, and deep,
Were the thoughts folded in thy silent breast ;
Thou, too, couldst watch and weep—
Hear, gentlest mother ! hear a heart oppress !

There is a wandering bark
Bearing one from me o'er the restless waves ;
Oh ! let thy soft eye mark
His course ;—be with him, Holiest, guide and save !

My soul is on that way ;
My thoughts are travellers o'er the waters dim ;
Through the long weary day,
I walk, o'ershadow'd by vain dreams of him.

Aid him,—and me, too, aid !
Oh ! 'tis not well, this earthly love's excess !
On thy weak child is laid
The burden of too deep a tenderness.

To a Departed Spirit.

Too much o'er *him* is pour'd
My being's hope—scarce leaving Heaven a part ;
Too fearfully adored,
Oh ! make not him the chastener of my heart !

I tremble with a sense
Of grief to be;—I hear a warning low,—
Sweet mother! call me hence!
This wild idolatry must end in woe.

The troubled joy of life,
Love's lightning happiness, my soul hath known ;
And, worn with feverish strife,
Would fold its wings ;—take back, take back thine own !

Hark! how the wind swept by!
The tempest's voice comes rolling o'er the wave—
Hope of the sailor's eye,
And maiden's heart, blest mother, guide and save!

TO A DEPARTED SPIRIT.

FROM the bright stars, or from the viewless air,
Or from some world unreach'd by human thought,
Spirit, sweet spirit ! if thy home be there,
And if thy visions with the past be fraught,
Answer me, answer me !

Have we not communed here of life and death?
Have we not said that love, such love as ours,
Was not to perish as a rose's breath,
To melt away, like song from festal bowers?
Answer, oh! answer me!

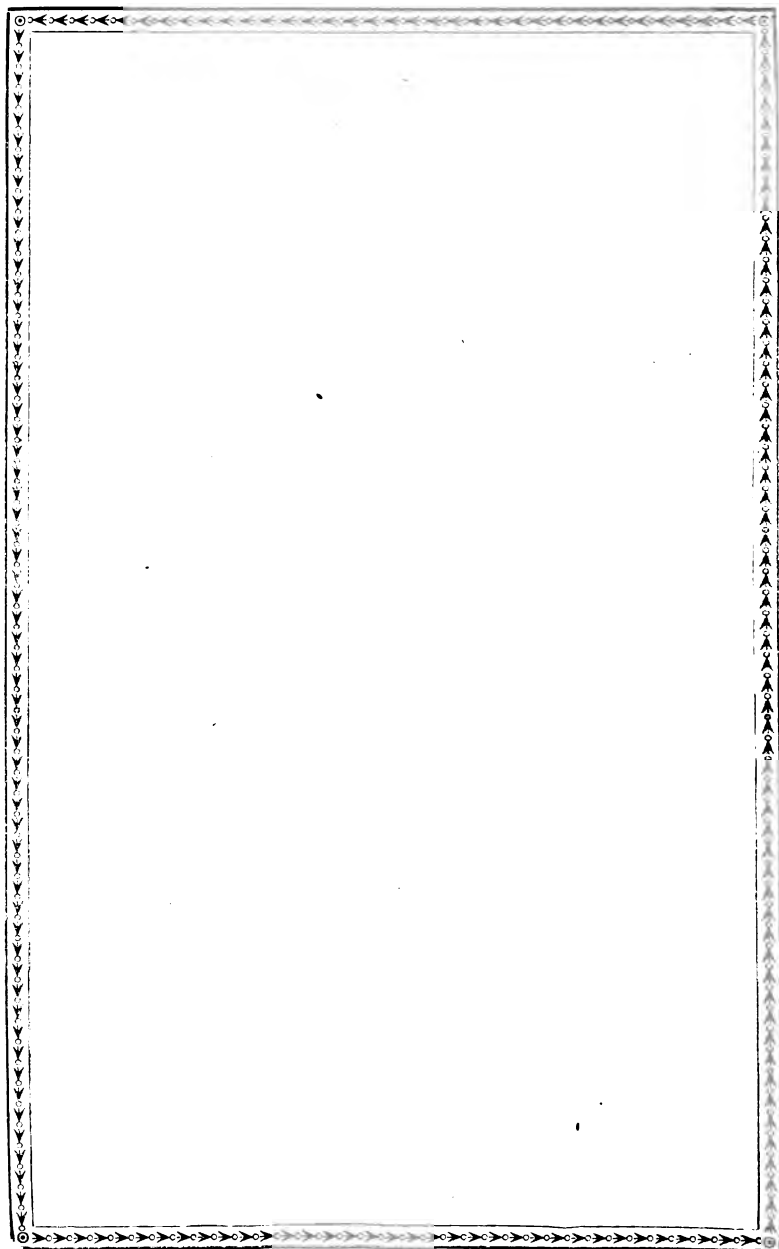
Thine eye's last light was mine—the soul that shone
Intensely, mournfully, through gathering haze—
Didst thou bear with thee to the shore unknown,
Nought of what lived in that long, earnest gaze?
Hear, hear, and answer me!

Thy voice—its low, soft, fervent, farewell tone
Thrill'd through the tempest of the parting strife,
Like a faint breeze :—oh ! from that music flown,
Send back *one* sound, if love's be quenchless life,
But once, oh ! answer me !



"Thy heart is in the upper world, where fleet the chamois bounds."

[P. 503.]



In the still noontide, in the sunset's hush,
In the dead hour of night, when thought grows deep,
When the heart's phantoms from the darkness rush,
Fearfully beautiful, to strive with sleep—
Spirit ! then answer me !

By the remembrance of our blended prayer ;
By all our tears, whose mingling made them sweet ;
By our last hope, the victor o'er despair ;—
Speak ! if our souls in deathless yearnings meet ;
Answer me, answer me !

The grave is silent :—and the far-off sky,
And the deep midnight—silent all, and lone !
Oh ! if thy buried love make no reply,
What voice has Earth ?—Hear, pity, speak, mine own !
Answer me, answer me !

THE CHAMOIS HUNTER'S LOVE.

“ For all his wildness and proud fantasies,
I love him ! ”—CROLY.

THY heart is in the upper world, where fleet the Chamois bounds,
Thy heart is where the mountain-fir shakes to the torrent-sounds ;
And where the snow-peaks gleam like stars, through the stillness of
the air,
And where the Lauwine's* peal is heard—Hunter ! thy heart is
there !

I know thou lov'st me well, dear friend ! but better, better far,
Thou lov'st that high and haughty life, with rocks and storms at
war ;
In the green sunny vales with me, thy spirit would but pine—
And yet I will be thine, my Love ! and yet I will be thine !

And I will not seek to woo thee down from those thy native heights,
With the sweet song, our land's own song, of pastoral delights ;
For thou must live as eagles live, thy path is not as mine—
And yet I will be thine, my Love ! and yet I will be thine.

* *Lauwine*, the avalanche.

And I will leave my blessed home, my father's joyous hearth,
With all the voices meeting there in tenderness and mirth,
With all the kind and laughing eyes, that in its firelight shine,
To sit forsaken in thy hut,—yet know that thou art mine !

It is my youth, it is my bloom, it is my glad free heart,
That I cast away for thee—for thee—all reckless as thou art !
With tremblings and with vigils lone, I bind myself to dwell
Yet, yet I would not change that lot,—oh no ! I love too well !

A mournful thing is love which grows to one so wild as thou,
With that bright restlessness of eye, that tameless fire of brow !
Mournful !—but dearer far I call its mingled fear and pride,
And the trouble of its happiness, than aught on earth beside.

To listen for thy step in vain, to start at every breath,
To watch through long long nights of storm, to sleep and dream of
death,
To wake in doubt and loneliness—this doom I know is mine,—
And yet I will be thine, my Love ! and yet I will be thine !

That I may greet thee from thine Alps, when thence thou com'st at
last,
That I may hear thy thrilling voice tell o'er each danger past,
That I may kneel and pray for thee, and win thee aid divine,—
For this I will be thine, my Love ! for this I will be thine !

THE INDIAN WITH HIS DEAD CHILD.*

IN the silence of the midnight
I journey with my dead ;
In the darkness of the forest-boughs,
A lonely path I tread.

But my heart is high and fearless,
As by mighty wings upborne ;
The mountain eagle hath not plumes
So strong as Love and Scorn.

* An Indian, who had established himself in a township of Maine, feeling indigantly the want of sympathy evinced towards him by the white inhabitants, particularly on the death of his only child, gave up his farm soon afterwards, dug up the body of his child, and carried it with him two hundred miles through the forests to join the Canadian Indians.—See *TUDOR'S Letters on the Eastern States of America*.

I have raised thee from the grave-sod,
By the white man's path defiled ;
On to th' ancestral wilderness,
I bear thy dust, my child !

I have ask'd the ancient deserts
To give my dead a place,
Where the stately footsteps of the free
Alone should leave a trace.

And the tossing pines made answer—
"Go, bring us back thine own !"
And the streams from all the hunters' hills,
Rush'd with an echoing tone.

Thou shalt rest by sounding waters
That yet untamed may roll ;
The voices of that chainless host
With joy shall fill thy soul.

In the silence of the midnight
I journey with the dead,
Where the arrows of my father's bow
Their falcon flight have sped.

I have left the spoiler's dwellings,
For evermore, behind ;
Unmingled with their household sounds,
For me shall sweep the wind.

Alone, amidst their hearth-fires,
I watch'd my child's decay,
Uncheer'd, I saw the spirit-light
From his young eyes fade away.

When his head sank on my bosom,
When the death-sleep o'er him fell,
Was there one to say, "A friend is near ?
There was none !—pale race, farewell !

To the forests, to the cedars,
To the warrior and his bow,
Back, back !—I bore thee laughing thence,
I bear thee slumbering now !

I bear thee unto burial
With the mighty hunters gone ;
I shall hear thee in the forest-breeze,
Thou wilt speak of joy, my son !

In the silence of the midnight
I journey with the dead ;
But my heart is strong, my step is fleet,
My father's path I tread.

SONG OF EMIGRATION.

THERE was heard a song on the chiming sea,
A mingled breathing of grief and glee ;
Man's voice, unbroken by sighs, was there,
Filling with triumph the sunny air ;
Of fresh green lands, and of pastures new,
It sang, while the bark through the surges flew.

But ever and anon
A murmur of farewell
Told, by its plaintive tone,
That from woman's lip it fell.

"Away, away o'er the foaming main !"—
This was the free and the joyous strain—
"There are clearer skies than ours, afar,
We will shape our course by a brighter star ;
There are plains whose verdure no foot hath press'd.
And whose wealth is all for the first brave guest."

"But alas ! that we should go"—
Sang the farewell voices then—
"From the homesteads, warm and low,
By the brook and in the glen !"

"We will rear new homes under trees that glow,
As if gems were the fruitage of every bough ;
O'er our white walls we will train the vine,
And sit in its shadow at day's decline ;
And watch our herds, as they range at will
Through the green savannas, all bright and still."

King of Arragon's Lament for his Brother. 507

"But woe for that sweet shade
Of the flowering orchard-trees,
Where first our children play'd
'Midst the birds and honey-bees!"

"All, all our own shall the forests be,
As to the bound of the roebuck free!
None shall say, 'Hither, no further pass!'
We will track each step through the wavy grass;
We will chase the elk in his speed and might,
And bring proud spoils to the earth at night."

"But, oh! the grey church-tower,
And the sound of Sabbath-bell,
And the shelter'd garden-bower,—
We have bid them all farewell!"

"We will give the names of our fearless race
To each bright river whose course we trace;
We will leave our memory with mounts and floods,
And the path of our daring in boundless woods!
And our works unto many a lake's green shore,
Where the Indian's graves lay, alone, before."

"But who shall teach the flowers,
Which our children loved, to dwell
In a soil that is not ours?—
Home, home and friends, farewell!"

THE KING OF ARRAGON'S LAMENT FOR
HIS BROTHER.*

"If I could see him, it were well with me!"

COLERIDGE'S *Wallenstein*.

THERE were lights and sounds of revelling in the vanquish'd city's
halls,
As by night the feast of victory was held within its walls;

* The grief of Ferdinand, King of Arragon, for the loss of his brother, Don Pedro, who was killed during the siege of Naples, is affectingly described by the historian Mariana. It is also the subject of one of the old Spanish Ballads in Lockhart's beautiful collection.

508 *King of Arragon's Lament for his Brother.*

And the conquerors fill'd the wine-cup high, after years of bright
blood shed;
But their Lord, the King of Arragon, 'midst the triumph, wail'd the
dead.

He look'd down from the fortress won, on the tents and flowers
below,
The moonlit sea, the torchlit streets,—and a gloom came o'er his
brow:
The voice of thousands floated up, with the horn and cymbal's tone;
But his heart, 'midst that proud music, felt more utterly alone.

And he cried, "Thou art mine, fair city! thou city of the sea!
But, oh! what portion of delight is mine at last in thee?—
I am lonely 'midst thy palaces, while the glad waves past them roll,
And the soft breath of thine orange-bowers is mournful to my soul.

"My brother! O my brother! thou art gone,—the true and
brave,
And the haughty joy of victory hath died upon thy grave;
There are many round my throne to stand, and to march where I
lead on;
There was *one* to love me in the world,—my brother! thou art gone!

"In the desert, in the battle, in the ocean-tempest's wrath,
We stood together, side by side; one hope was ours,—one path;
Thou hast wrapp'd me in thy soldier's cloak, thou hast fenced me
with thy breast;
Thou hast watch'd beside my couch of pain—oh! bravest heart,
and best!

"I see the festive lights around;—o'er a dull sad world they shine;
I hear the voice of victory—my Pedro! where is *thine*?
The only voice in whose kind tone my spirit found reply!—
O brother! I have bought too dear this hollow pageantry!

"I have hosts, and gallant fleets, to spread my glory and my sway,
And chiefs to lead them fearlessly;—my *friend* hath pass'd away!
For the kindly look, the word of cheer, my heart may thirst in vain,
And the face that was as light to mine—it cannot come again!

"I have made thy blood, thy faithful blood, the offering for a crown;
With love, which earth bestows not twice, I have purchased cold
renown;
How often will my weary heart 'midst the sounds of triumph die,
When I think of thee, my brother! thou flower of chivalry!

"I am lonely—I am lonely! this rest is even as death!
Let me hear again the ringing spears, and the battle-trumpet's
breath;
Let me see the fiery charger foam, and the royal banner wave—
But where art thou, my brother? where?—in thy low and early
grave!"

And louder swell'd the songs of joy through that victorious night,
And faster flow'd the red wine forth, by the stars' and torches' light;
But low and deep, amidst the mirth, was heard the conqueror
moan—

"My brother! O my brother! best and bravest! thou art gone!"

THE RETURN.

"HAST thou come with the heart of thy childhood back?
The free, the pure, the kind?"—
So murmur'd the trees in my homeward track,
As they play'd to the mountain-wind.

"Hath thy soul been true to its early love?"
Whisper'd my native streams;
"Hath the spirit nursed amidst hill and grove,
Still revered its first high dreams?"

"Hast thou borne in thy bosom the holy prayer
Of the child in his parent-halls?"—
Thus breathed a voice on the thrilling air,
From the old ancestral walls.

"Hast thou kept thy faith with the faithful dead,
Whose place of rest is nigh?
With the father's blessing o'er thee shed,
With the mother's trusting eye?"—

Then my tears gush'd forth in sudden rain,
As I answer'd—"O ye shades!
I bring not my childhood's heart again
To the freedom of your glades.

"I have turn'd from my first pure love aside,
O bright and happy streams!
Light after light, in my soul have died
The day-spring's glorious dreams.

" And the holy prayer from my thoughts hath pass'd—
The prayer at my mother's knee;
Darken'd and troubled I come at last,
Home of my boyish glee !

" But I bear from my childhood a gift of tears,
To soften and atone ;
And oh ! ye scenes of those blessed years
They shall make me again your own."

THE VAUDOIS WIFE.*

" CLASP me a little longer, on the brink
Of fate ! while I can feel thy dear caress :
And when this heart hath ceased to beat, oh ! think—
And let it mitigate thy woe's excess—
That thou to me hast been all tenderness,
And friend, to more than human friendship just.
Oh ! by that retrospect of happiness,
And by the hopes of an immortal trust,
God shall assuage thy pangs, when I am laid in dust."

Gertrude of Wyoming.

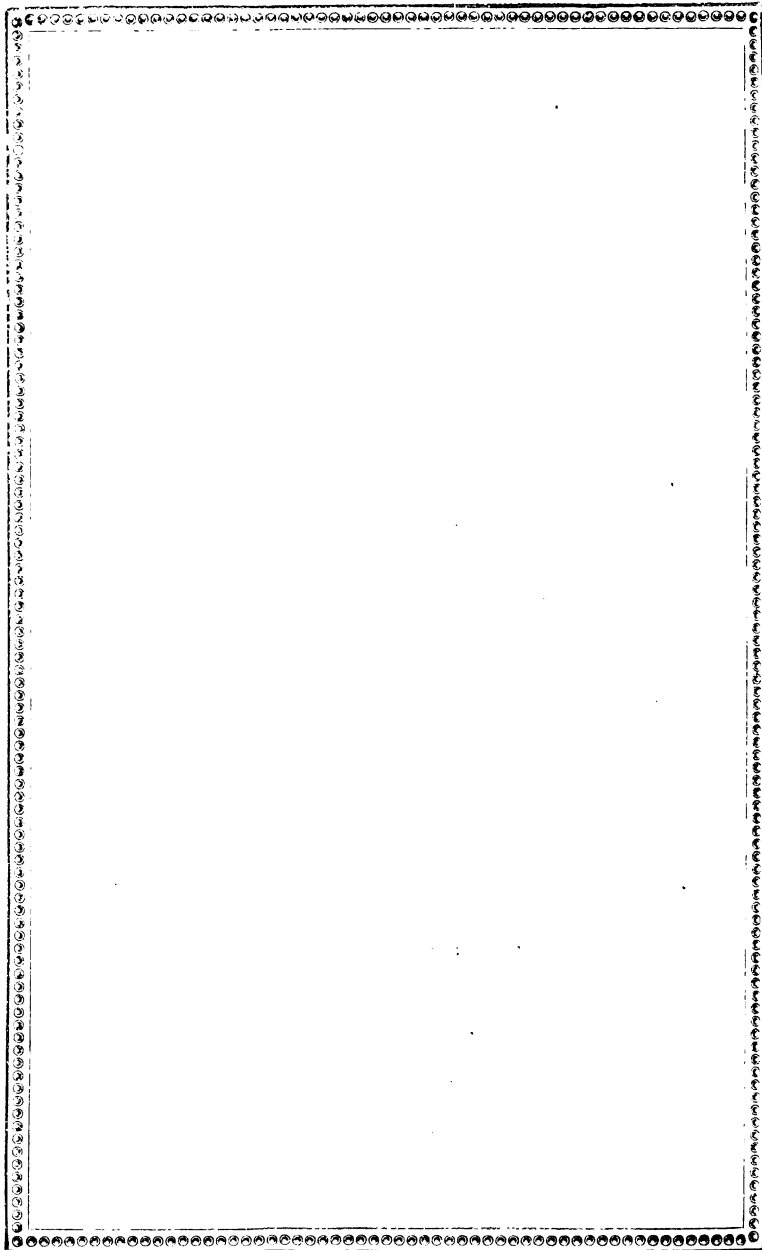
THY voice is in my ear, beloved !
Thy look is in my heart,
Thy bosom is my resting-place,
And yet I must depart.
Earth on my soul is strong—too strong—
Too precious is its chain,
All woven of thy love, dear friend,
Yet vain—though mighty—vain !

Thou see'st mine eye grow dim, beloved !
Thou see'st my life-blood flow,—
Bow to the chastener silently,
And calmly let me go !
A little while between our hearts
The shadowy gulf must lie,
Yet have we for their communing
Still, still Eternity !

* The wife of a Vaudois leader, in one of the attacks made on the Protestant hamlets, received a mortal wound, and died in her husband's arms, exhorting him to courage and endurance.



"Speak to me in the thrilling minster's gloom!" [p. 516.



Alas ! thy tears are on my cheek,
My spirit they detain ;
I know that from thine agony
Is wrung that burning rain.
Best, kindest, weep not ;—make the pang,
The bitter conflict, less—
Oh ! sad it is, and yet a joy,
To feel thy love's excess !

But calm thee ! Let the thought of death
A solemn peace restore !
The voice that must be silent soon,
Would speak to thee once more,
That thou mayst bear its blessing on
Through years of after life—
A token of consoling love,
Even from this hour of strife.

I bless thee for the noble heart,
The tender and the true,
Where mine hath found the happiest rest
That e'er fond woman's knew ;
I bless thee, faithful friend and guide,
For my own, my treasured share,
In the mournful secrets of thy soul,
In thy sorrow, in thy prayer.

I bless thee for kind looks and words
Shower'd on my path like dew,
For all the love in those deep eyes,
A gladness ever new !
For the voice which ne'er to mine replied
But in kindly tones of cheer ;
For every spring of happiness
My soul hath tasted here !

I bless thee for the last rich boon
Won from affection tried,
The right to gaze on death with thee,
To perish by thy side !
And yet more for the glorious hope
Even to *these* moments given—
Did not *thy* spirit ever lift
The trust of *mine* to Heaven ?
L L

The Guerilla Leader's Vow.

Now be *thou* strong ! Oh ! knew we not
 Our path must lead to this ?
 A shadow and a trembling still
 Were mingled with our bliss !
 We plighted our young hearts when storms
 Were dark upon the sky,
 In full, deep knowledge of their task
 To suffer and to die !

Be strong ! I leave the living voice
 Of this, my martyr'd blood,
 With the thousand echoes of the hills,
 With the torrent's foaming flood,—
 A spirit 'midst the caves to dwell,
 A token on the air,
 To rouse the valiant from repose,
 The fainting from despair.

Hear it, and bear thou on, my love !
 Ay, joyously endure !
 Our mountains must be altars yet,
 Inviolable and pure :
 There must our God be worshipp'd still
 With the worship of the free—
 Farewell !—there's but *one* pang in death,
 One only,—leaving thee !

THE GUERRILLA LEADER'S VOW.

"All my pretty ones !
 Did you say all ?

 Let us make medicine of this great revenge,
 To cure this deadly grief !"—*Macbeth*.

My battle-vow !—no minster walls
 Gave back the burning word,
 Nor cross nor shrine the low deep tone
 Of smother'd vengeance heard :
 But the ashes of a ruin'd home
 Thrill'd, as it sternly rose,
 With the mingling voice of blood that shook
 The midnight's dark repose,

I breathed it not o'er kingly tombs,
But where my children lay,
And the startled vulture, at my step,
Soar'd from their precious clay.
I stood amidst my dead alone—
I kiss'd their lips—I pour'd,
In the strong silence of that hour,
My spirit on my sword.

The roof-tree fall'n, the smouldering floor,
The blacken'd threshold-stone,
The bright hair torn, and soil'd with blood,
Whose fountain was my own ;
These, and the everlasting hills,
Bore witness that wild night ;
Before them rose th' avenger's soul,
In crush'd affection's might.

The stars, the searching stars of heaven,
With keen looks would upbraid,
If from my heart the fiery vow,
Sear'd on it then, could fade.
They have no cause !—Go, ask the streams
That by my paths have swept,
The red waves that unstain'd were born—
How hath my faith been kept ?

And other eyes are on my soul,
That never, never close,
The sad, sweet glances of the lost—
They leave me no repose.
Haunting my night-watch 'midst the rocks,
And by the torrent's foam,
Through the dark-rolling mists they shine,
Full, full of love and home !

Alas ! the mountain eagle's heart,
When wrong'd, may yet find rest ;
Scorning the place made desolate,
He seeks another nest.
But I—your soft looks wake the thirst
That wins no quenching rain ;
Ye drive me back, my beautiful !
To the stormy fight again !

THEKLA AT HER LOVER'S GRAVE.*

"Thither where he lies buried !
That single spot is the whole world to me."

COLERIDGE'S *Wallenstein*.

THY voice was in my soul ! it call'd me on ;
O my lost friend ! thy voice was in my soul :
From the cold, faded world, whence thou art gone,
To hear no more life's troubled billows roll,
I come, I come !

Now speak to me again ! we loved so well—
We *loved* ! oh ! still, I know that still we love !
I have left all things with thy dust to dwell,
Through these dim aisles in dreams of *thee* to rove :
This is my home !

Speak to me in the thrilling minster's gloom !
Speak ! thou hast died, and sent me no farewell !
I will not shrink ;—oh ! mighty is the tomb,
But one thing mightier, which it cannot quell,
This woman's heart !

This lone, full, fragile heart !—the strong alone
In love and grief—of both the burning shrine !
Thou, my soul's friend ! with grief hast surely done,
But with the love which made thy spirit mine,
Say, couldst thou part ?

I hear the rustling banners : and I hear
The wind's low singing through the fretted stone ;
I hear not *thee* ; and yet I feel thee near—
What is this bound that keeps thee from thine own ?
Breathe it away !

I wait thee—I adjure thee ! hast thou known
How I have loved thee ! couldst thou dream it all ?
Am I not here, with night and death alone,
And fearing not ? and hath my spirit's call
O'er thine no sway ?

* See *Wallenstein*, act vi.

Thou *canst* not come ! or thus I should not weep !
Thy love is deathless—but no longer free !
Soon would its wing triumphantly o'ersweep
The viewless barrier, if such power might be,
Soon, soon, and fast !

But I shall come to thee ! our souls' deep dreams,
Our young affections, have not gush'd in vain ;
Soon in one tide shall blend the sever'd streams,
The worn heart break its bonds—and death and pain
Be with the past !

THE SISTERS OF SCIO.

" As are our hearts, our way is one,
And cannot be divided. Strong affection
Contentends with all things, and o'ercometh all things.
Will I not live with thee ? will I not cheer thee ?
Wouldst thou be lonely then ? wouldst thou be sad ? "

JOANNA BAILLIE.

" SISTER, sweet sister ! let me weep awhile !
Bear with me—give the sudden passion way !
Thoughts of our own lost home, our sunny isle,
Come, as a wind that o'er a reed hath sway ;
Till my heart dies with yearnings and sick fears ;—
Oh ! could my life melt from me in these tears !

" Our father's voice, our mother's gentle eye,
Our brother's bounding step—where are they, where ?
Desolate, desolate our chambers lie !—
How hast *thou* won thy spirit from despair ?
O'er *mine* swift shadows, gusts of terror, sweep ;—
I sink away—bear with me—let me weep ! "

" Yes ! weep, my sister ! weep, till from thy heart
The weight flow forth in tears ; yet sink thou not !
I bind my sorrow to a lofty part,
For thee, my gentle one ! our orphan lot
To meet in quenchless thirst ; my soul is strong—
Thou, too, wilt rise in holy might ere long.

" A breath of our free heavens and noble sires,
A memory of our old victorious dead,—
These mantle me with power ! and though their fires
In a frail censer briefly may be shed,

Yet shall they light us onward, side by side ;—
Have the wild birds, and have not *we*, a guide?

"Cheer, then, beloved! on whose meek brow is set
Our mother's image—in whose voice a tone,
A faint sweet sound of hers is lingering yet,
An echo of our childhood's music gone ;—
Cheer thee! thy sister's heart and faith are high;
Our path is one—with thee I live and die!"

BERNARDO DEL CARPIO.

THE celebrated Spanish champion, Bernardo del Carpio, having made many ineffectual efforts to procure the release of his father, the Count Saldana, who had been imprisoned by King Alfonso of Asturias, almost from the time of Bernardo's birth, at last took up arms in despair. The war which he maintained proved so destructive, that the men of the land gathered round the King, and united in demanding Saldana's liberty. Alfonso, accordingly, offered Bernardo immediate possession of his father's person, in exchange for his castle of Carpio. Bernardo, without hesitation, gave up his stronghold, with all his captives; and being assured that his father was then on his way from prison, rode forth with the King to meet him. "And when he saw his father approaching, he exclaimed," says the ancient chronicle, "'Oh, God! is the Count of Saldana indeed coming?'—'Look where he is,' replied the cruel King, 'and now go and greet him whom you have so long desired to see.'" The remainder of the story will be found related in the ballad. The chronicles and romances leave us nearly in the dark as to Bernardo's history after this event.

THE warrior bow'd his crested head, and tamed his heart of fire,
And sued the haughty king to free his long-imprison'd sire;
"I bring thee here my fortress keys, I bring my captive train,
I pledge thee faith, my liege, my lord!—oh, break my father's
chain!"

"Rise, rise! even now thy father comes, a ransom'd man this day;
Mount thy good horse, and thou and I will meet him on his way."
Then lightly rose that loyal son, and bounded on his steed,
And urged, as if with lance in rest, the charger's foamy speed.

And lo! from far, as on they press'd, there came a glittering band,
With one that 'midst them stately rode, as a leader in the land;
"Now haste, Bernardo, haste! for there, in very truth, is he,
The father whom thy faithful heart hath yearn'd so long to see."

His dark eye flash'd, his proud breast heaved, his cheek's blood
came and went;
He reach'd that grey-hair'd chieftain's side, and there, dismounting,
bent;

A lowly knee to earth he bent, his father's hand he took,—
What was there in its touch that all his fiery spirit shook ?

That hand was cold—a frozen thing—it dropp'd from his like lead,—
He look'd up to the face above—the face was of the dead !
A plume waved o'er the noble brow—the brow was fix'd and
white ;—
He met at last his father's eyes—but in them was no sight !

Up from the ground he sprang, and gazed, but who could paint that
gaze ?
They hush'd their very hearts, that saw its horror and amaze ;
They might have chain'd him, as before that stony form he stood,
For the power was stricken from his arm, and from his lip the
blood.

" Father ! " at length he murmur'd low—and wept like childhood
then,—
Talk not of grief till thou hast seen the tears of warlike men !—
He thought on all his glorious hopes, and all his young renown,—
He flung the falchion from his side, and in the dust sat down.

Then covering with his steel-gloved hands his darkly mournful
brow,
" No more, there is no more," he said, " to lift the sword for
now.—
My king is false, my hope betray'd, my father, oh ! the worth,
The glory, and the loveliness, are pass'd away from earth !

" I thought to stand where banners waved, my sire ! beside thee
yet,
I would that *there* our kindred blood on Spain's free soil had
met,—
Thou wouldst have known my spirit then,—for thee my fields were
won,—
And thou hast perish'd in thy chains, as though thou hadst no
son ! "

Then, starting from the ground once more, he seized the monarch's
rein,
Amidst the pale and wilder'd looks of all the courtier train ;
And with a fierce, o'ermastering grasp, the rearing war-horse led,
And sternly set them face to face,—the king before the dead !—

" Came I not forth upon thy pledge, my father's hand to kiss ?—
Be still, and gaze thou on, false king ! and tell me what is this !

The voice, the glance, the heart I sough!—give answer, where are they?—

If thou wouldst clear thy perjured soul, send life through this cold clay!

“Into these glassy eyes put light,—be still! keep down thine ire,—

Bid these white lips a blessing speak—this earth is *not* my sire!

Give me back him for whom I strove, for whom my blood was shed,—

Thou canst not—and a king! His dust be mountains on thy head!”

He loosed the steed; his slack hand fell,—upon the silent face

He cast one long, deep, troubled look.—then turn’d from that sad place:

His hope was crush’d, his after-fate untold in martial strain,—

His banner led the spears no more amidst the hills of Spain.

THE TOMB OF MADAME LANGHANS.*

“To a mysteriously consorted pair
This place is consecrate; to death and life,
And to the best affections that proceed
From this conjunction.”

WORDSWORTH.

How many hopes were borne upon thy bier,
O bride of stricken love! in anguish hither!
Like flowers, the first and fairest of the year
Pluck’d on the bosom of the dead to wither;
Hopes, from their source all holy, tho’ of earth,
All brightly gathering round affection’s hearth.

Of mingled prayer they told; of Sabbath hours;
Of morn’s farewell, and evening’s blessed meeting;
Of childhood’s voice, amidst the household bowers;
And bounding step, and smile of joyous greeting;—
But thou, young mother! to thy gentle heart
Didst take thy babe, and meekly so depart.

* At Hindelbank, near Berne, she is represented as bursting from the sepulchre, with her infant in her arms, at the sound of the last trumpet. An inscription on the tomb concludes thus:—“Here am I, O God! with the child whom Thou hast given me.”

How many hopes have sprung in radiance hence !
Their trace yet lights the dust where thou art sleeping !
A solemn joy comes o'er me, and a sense
Of triumph, blent with nature's gush of weeping,
As, kindling up the silent stone, I see
The glorious vision, caught by faith, of thee.

Slumberer ! love calls thee, for the night is past ;
Put on the immortal beauty of thy waking !
Captive ! and hear'st thou not the trumpet's blast,
The long, victorious note, thy bondage breaking ?
Thou hear'st, thou answer'st, " God of earth and Heaven !
Here am I, with the child whom Thou hast given ! "

THE EXILE'S DIRGE.

" FEAR no more the heat o' the sun,
Nor the furious winter's rages,
Thou thy worldly task hast done,
Home art gone, and ta'en thy wages."

Cymbeline.

" I attended a funeral where there were a number of the German settlers present. After I had performed such service as is usual on similar occasions, a most venerable-looking old man came forward, and asked me if I were willing that they should perform some of their peculiar rites. He opened a very ancient version of Luther's Hymns, and they all began to sing, in German, so loud that the woods echoed the strain. There was something affecting in the singing of these ancient people, carrying one of their brethren to his last home, and using the language and rites which they had brought with them over the sea from the *Vaterland*, a word which often occurred in this hymn. It was a long, slow, and mournful air, which they sang as they bore the body along; the words '*mein Gott*,' '*mein Bruder*,' and '*Vaterland*,' died away in distant echoes amongst the woods. I shall long remember that funeral hymn."—FLINT'S *Recollections of the Valley of the Mississippi*.

THERE went a dirge through the forest's gloom.—
An exile was borne to a lonely tomb.

" Brother ! " (so the chant was sung
In the slumberer's native tongue),
" Friend and brother ! not for thee
Shall the sound of weeping be :—
Long the Exile's woe hath lain
On thy life a withering chain ;

The Exile's Dirge.

Music from thine own blue streams,
Wander'd through thy fever-dreams
Voices from thy country's vines,
Met thee 'midst the alien pines,
And thy true heart died away ;
And thy spirit would not stay."

So swell'd the chant ! and the deep wind's moan
Seem'd through the cedars to murmur—"Gone!"

"Brother ! by the rolling Rhine,
Stands the home that once was thine—
Brother ! now thy dwelling lies
Where the Indian arrow flies !
He that blest thine infant head,
Fills a distant greensward bed ;
She that heard thy lisping prayer,
Slumbers low beside him there ;
They that earliest with thee play'd,
Rest beneath their own oak shade,
Far, far hence !—yet sea nor shore
Haply, brother ! part ye more ;
God hath call'd thee to that band
In the immortal Fatherland !"

"The *Fatherland* !"—with that sweet word
A burst of tears 'midst the strain was heard.

"Brother ! were we there with thee
Rich would many a meeting be !
Many a broken garland bound,
Many a mourn'd and lost one found !
But our task is still to bear,
Still to breathe in changeful air ;
Loved and bright things to resign,
As even now this dust of thine ;
Yet to hope !—to hope in Heaven,
Though flowers fall, and ties be riven—
Yet to pray ! and wait the hand
Beckoning to the Fatherland !"

And the requiem died in the forest's gloom ;—
They had reach'd the Exile's lonely tomb.

THE DREAMING CHILD.

"ALAS ! what kind of grief should thy years know ?
Thy brow and cheek are smooth as waters be
When no breath troubles them."

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.

AND is there sadness in *thy* dreams, my boy ?
What should the cloud be made of ?—blessed child !
Thy spirit, borne upon a breeze of joy,
All day hath ranged through sunshine, clear, yet mild :

And now thou tremblest !—wherefore ?—in *thy* soul
There lies no past, no future.—Thou hast heard
No sound of presage from the distance roll,
Thy heart bears traces of no arrowy word.

From thee no love hath gone ; thy mind's young eye
Hath look'd not into Death's, and thence become
A questioner of mute Eternity,
A weary searcher for a viewless home :

Nor hath thy sense been quicken'd unto pain,
By feverish watching for some step beloved ;
Free are thy thoughts, an ever-changeeful train,
Glancing like dewdrops, and as lightly moved.

Yet now, on billows of strange passion toss'd,
How art thou wilder'd in the cave of sleep !
My gentle child ! 'midst what dim phantoms lost,
Thus in mysterious anguish dost thou weep ?

Awake ! they sadden me—those early tears,
First gushings of the strong dark river's flow,
That *must* o'ersweep thy soul with coming years
Th' unfathomable flood of human woe !

Awful to watch, e'en rolling through a dream,
Forcing wild spray-drops but from childhood's eyes !
Wake, wake ! as yet *thy* life's transparent stream
Should wear the tinge of none but summer skies.

Come from the shadow of those realms unknown,
Where now thy thoughts dismay'd and darkling rove ;
Come to the kindly region all thine own,
The home, still bright for thee with guardian love.

Happy, fair child ! that yet a mother's voice
Can win thee back from visionary strife !—
Oh ! shall *my* soul, thus waken'd to rejoice,
Start from the dreamlike wilderness of life ?

THE CHARMED PICTURE.

" Oh ! that those lips had language !—Life hath pass'd
With me but roughly since I saw thee last."

COWPER.

THINE eyes are charm'd—thine earnest eyes—
Thou image of the dead !
A spell within their sweetness lies,
A virtue thence is shed.

Oft in their meek blue light enshrined,
A blessing seems to be,
And sometimes there my wayward mind
A still reproach can see :

And sometimes Pity—soft and deep,
And quivering through a tear ;
Even as if Love in Heaven could weep,
For Grief left drooping here.

And oh ! my spirit needs that balm,
Needs it 'midst fitful mirth ;
And in the night-hour's haunted calm,
And by the lonely hearth.

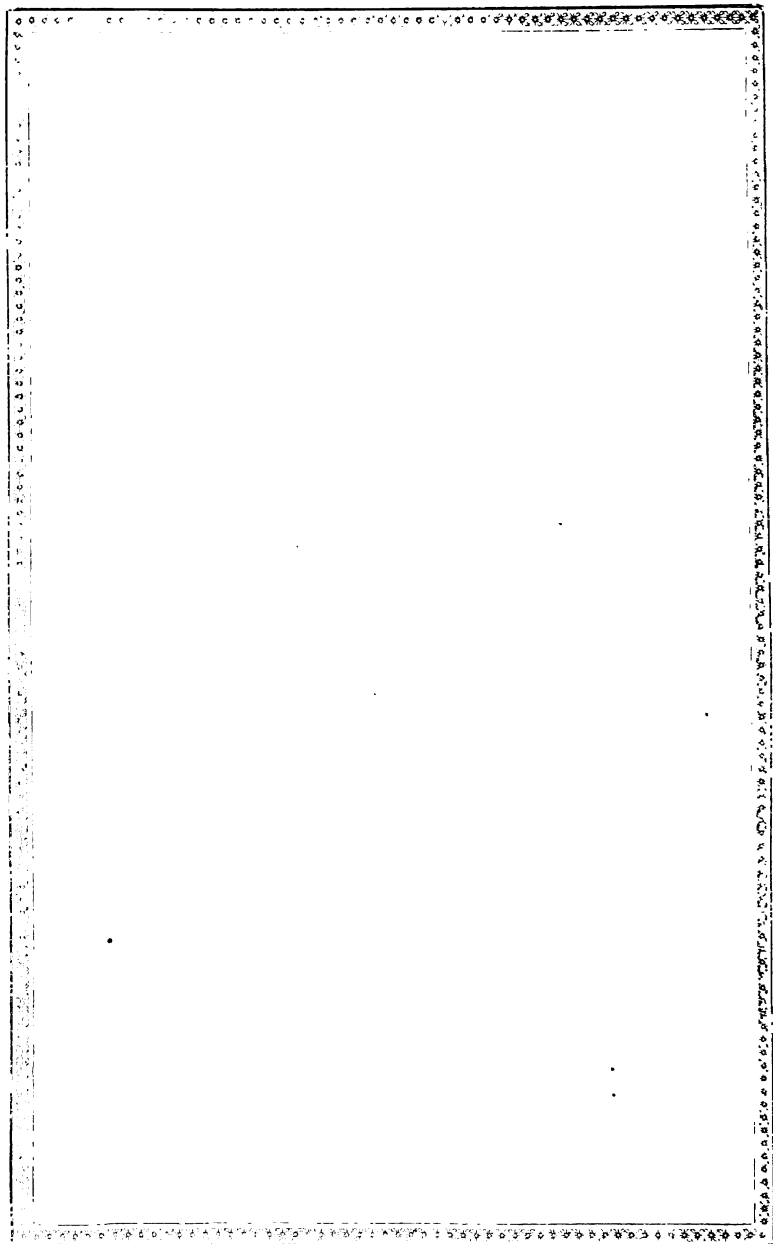
Look on me *thus*, when hollow praise
Hath made the weary pine
For one true tone of other days,
One glance of love like thine !

Look on me *thus*, when sudden glee
Bears my quick heart along,
On wings that struggle to be free,
As bursts of skylark song.



"Gloom is upon thy lonely hearth,
O silent house ! once fill'd with mirth."

[P. 537.



In vain, in vain ;—too soon are felt
The wounds they cannot flee ;
Better in childlike tears to melt,
Pouring my soul on thee !

Sweet face, that o'er my childhood shone,
Whence is thy power of change,
Thus ever shadowing back my own,
The rapid and the strange ?

Whence are they charm'd—those earnest eyes?—
I know the mystery well !
In mine own trembling bosom lies
The spirit of the spell !

Of Memory, Conscience, Love, 'tis born—
Oh ! change no longer, thou !
For ever be the blessing worn
On thy pure thoughtful brow !

PARTING WORDS.

“One struggle more, and I am free.”—BYRON.

LEAVE me, oh, leave me !—unto all below
Thy presence binds me with too deep a spell ;
Thou mak'st those mortal regions, whence I go,
Too mighty in their loveliness—farewell,
That I may part in peace !

Leave me !—thy footstep, with its lightest sound,
The very shadow of thy waving hair,
Wakes in my soul a feeling too profound,
Too strong for aught that loves and dies, to bear—
Oh ! bid the conflict cease !

I hear thy whisper—and the warm tears gush
Into mine eyes, the quick pulse thrills my heart ;
Thou bidd'st the peace, the reverential hush,
The still submission, from my thoughts depart :
Dear one ! this must not be,

The Message to the Dead.

The past looks on me from thy mournful eye,
 The beauty of our free and vernal days ;
 Our communings with sea, and hill, and sky—
 Oh ! take that bright world from my spirit's gaze !
 Thou art all earth to me !

Shut out the sunshine from my dying room,
 The jasmine's breath, the murmur of the bee ;
 Let not the joy of bird-notes pierce the gloom !
 They speak of love, of summer, and of thee,
 Too much—and death is here !

Doth our own spring make happy music now,
 From the old beech-roots flashing into day ?
 Are the pure lilies imaged in its flow ?
 Alas ! vain thoughts ! that fondly thus can stray
 From the dread hour so near !

If I could but draw courage from the light
 Of thy clear eye, that ever shone to bless !—
 Not now ! 'twill not be now !—my aching sight
 Drinks from that fount a flood of tenderness,
 Bearing all strength away !

Leave me !—thou com'st between my heart and Heaven !
 I would be still, in voiceless prayer to die !—
 Why must our souls thus love, and then be riven ?—
 Return ! thy parting wakes mine agony !—
 Oh, yet awhile delay !

THE MESSAGE TO THE DEAD.*

THOU'RT passing hence, my brother !
 Oh ! my earliest friend, farewell !
 Thou'rt leaving me, without thy voice,
 In a lonely home to dwell ;
 And from the hills, and from the hearth,
 And from the household-tree,
 With thee departs the lingering mirth,
 The brightness goes with thee.

* "Messages from the living to the dead are not uncommon in the Highlands. The Gael have such a ceaseless consciousness of immortality, that their departed friends are considered as merely absent for a time, and permitted to relieve the hours of separation by occasional intercourse with the objects of their earliest affections."—See the *Notes to Mrs. Brunton's Works*.

The Message to the Dead.

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But thou, my friend, my brother !
Thou'rt speeding to the shore
Where the dirgelike tone of parting words
Shall smite the soul no more !
And thou wilt see our holy dead,
The lost on earth and main ;
Into the sheaf of kindred hearts,
Thou wilt be bound again !

Tell, then, our friend of boyhood,
That yet his name is heard
On the blue mountains, whence his youth
Pass'd like a swift bright bird.
The light of his exulting brow,
The vision of his glee,
Are on me still—Oh ! still I trust
That smile again to see.

And tell our fair young sister,
The rose cut down in spring,
That yet my gushing soul is fill'd
With lays she loved to sing.
Her soft, deep eyes look through my dreams,
Tender and sadly sweet ;—
Tell her my heart within me burns
Once more that gaze to meet !

And tell our white-hair'd father,
That in the paths he trode,
The child he loved, the last on earth,
Yet walks and worships God.
Say, that his last fond blessing yet
Rests on my soul like dew,
And by its hallowing might I trust
Once more his face to view.

And tell our gentle mother,
That on her grave I pour
The sorrows of my spirit forth,
As on her breast of yore.
Happy thou art that soon, how soon,
Our good and bright will see !—
Oh ! brother, brother ! may I dwell,
Ere long, with them and thee !

THE SOLDIER'S DEATH-BED.

"Wie herrlich die Sonne dort untergeht! da ich noch ein Bube war—war's mein Lieblingsgedanke, wie sie zu leben, wie sie zu sterben!"—*Die Räuber.*

Like thee to die, thou sun!—My boyhood's dream
Was this; and now my spirit, with thy beam,
Ebbs from a field of victory!—yet the hour
Bears back upon me, with a torrent's power,
Nature's deep longings:—Oh, for some kind eye,
Wherein to meet love's fervent farewell gaze;
Some breast to pillow life's last agony,
Some voice, to speak of hope and better days,
Beyond the pass of shadows!—But I go,
I, that have been so loved, go hence alone;
And ye, now gathering round my own hearth's glow,
Sweet friends! it may be that a softer tone,
Even in this moment, with your laughing glee,
Mingles its cadence while you speak of me:
Of me, your soldier, 'midst the mountains lying,
On the red banner of his battles dying,
Far, far away!—and oh! your parting prayer—
Will not his name be fondly murmur'd there?
It will!—A blessing on that holy hearth!
Though clouds are darkening to o'ercast its mirth.
Mother! I may not hear thy voice again;
Sisters! ye watch to greet my step in vain;
Young brother, fare thee well!—on each dear head
Blessing and love a thousandfold be shed,
My soul's last earthly breathings!—May your home
Smile for you ever!—May no winter come,
No *world*, between your hearts! May e'en your tears,
For my sake, full of long-remember'd years,
Quicken the true affections that entwine
Your lives in one bright bond!—I may not sleep
Amidst our fathers, where those tears might shine
Over my slumbers; yet your love will keep
My memory living in the ancestral halls,
Where shame hath never trod:—the dark night falls,
And I depart.—The brave are gone to rest,
The brothers of my combats, on the breast
Of the red field they reap'd:—their work is done—
Thou, too, art set!—farewell, farewell, thou sun!
The last lone watcher of the bloody sod,
Offers a trusting spirit up to God.

THE IMAGE IN THE HEART.

TO * * * *

"True, indeed, it is,
That they whom death has hidden from our sight,
Are worthiest of the mind's regard : with them
The future cannot contradict the past—
Mortality's last exercise and proof
Is undergone."

WORDSWORTH.

"The love where death has set his seal,
Nor age can chill, nor rival steal,
Nor falsehood disavow."

BYRON.

I CALL thee blest !—though now the voice be fled,
Which, to thy soul, brought dayspring with its tone,
And o'er the gentle eyes though dust be spread,
Eyes that ne'er look'd on thine but light was throw
Far through thy breast :

And though the music of thy life be broken,
Or changed in every chord, since he is gone,
Feeling all this, even yet, by many a token,
O thou, the deeply, but the brightly lone !
I call thee blest !

For in thy heart there is a holy spot,
As 'mid the waste an Isle of fount and palm,
For ever green !—the world's breath enters not,
The passion-tempests may not break its calm ;
'Tis thine, all thine !

Thither, in trust unbaffled, mayst thou turn,
From bitter words, cold greetings, heartless eyes,
Quenching thy soul's thirst at the hidden urn,
That, fill'd with waters of sweet memory, lies
In its own shrine.

Thou hast thy *home* !—there is no power in change
To reach that temple of the past ;—no sway,
In all time brings of sudden, dark, or strange,
To sweep the still transparent peace away
From its hush'd air !

M M 2

The Land of Dreams.

And oh ! that glorious image of the dead !
 Sole thing whereon a deathless love may rest,
 And in deep faith and dreamy worship shed
 Its high gifts fearlessly !—I call thee blest,
 If only there !

Blest, for the beautiful within thee dwelling,
 Never to fade !—a refuge from distrust,
 A spring of purer life, still freshly welling,
 To clothe the barrenness of earthly dust
 With flowers divine.

And thou hast been beloved !—it is no dream,
 No false mirage for *thee*, the fervent love,
 The rainbow still unreach'd, the ideal gleam,
 That ever seems before, beyond, above,
 Far off to shine.

But thou, from all the daughters of the earth
 Singled and mark'd, hast *known* its home and place ;
 And the high memory of its holy worth,
 To this our life a glory and a grace
 For thee hath given.

And art thou not *still* fondly, truly loved ?
 Thou art !—the love his spirit bore away,
 Was not for death !—a treasure but removed,
 A bright bird parted for a clearer day,—
 Thine still in Heaven !

 THE LAND OF DREAMS.

"AND dreams, in their development, have breath,
 And tears, and tortures, and the touch of joy ;
 They leave a weight upon our waking thoughts,
 They make us what we were not—what they will,
 And shake us with the vision that's gone by."

BYRON.

O SPIRIT-LAND ! thou land of dreams !
 A world thou art of mysterious gleams,
 Of startling voices, and sounds at strife,—
 A world of the dead in the hues of life.

Like a wizard's magic glass thou art,
When the wavy shadows float by, and part :
Visions of aspects, now loved, now strange,
Glimmering and mingling in ceaseless change.

Thou art like a city of the past,
With its gorgeous halls into fragments cast,
Amidst whose ruins there glide and play
Familiar forms of the world's to-day.

Thou art like the depths where the seas have birth,
Rich with the wealth that is lost from earth,—
All the sere flowers of our days gone by,
And the buried gems in thy bosom lie.

Yes ! thou art like those dim sea-caves,
A realm of treasures, a realm of graves !
And the shapes through thy mysteries that come and go,
Are of beauty and terror, of power and woe.

But for *me*, O thou picture-land of sleep !
Thou art all one world of affections deep,—
And wrung from my heart is each flushing dye,
That sweeps o'er thy chambers of imagery.

And thy bowers are fair—even as Eden fair ;
All the beloved of my soul are there !
The forms my spirit most pines to see,
The eyes, whose love hath been life to me :

They are there,—and each blessed voice I hear,
Kindly, and joyous, and silvery clear ;
But under-tones are in each, that say,—
“ It is but a dream ; it will melt away ! ”

I walk with sweet friends in the sunset's glow ;
I listen to music of long ago ;
But one thought, like an omen, breathes faint through
the lay,—
“ It is but a dream ; it will melt away ! ”

I sit by the hearth of my early days ;
All the home-faces are met by the blaze,—
And the eyes of the mother shine soft, yet say,
“ It is but a dream ; it will melt away ! ”

The Two Homes.

And away, like a flower's passing breath, 'tis gone,
 And I wake more sadly, more deeply lone !
 Oh ! a haunted heart is a weight to bear,—
 Bright faces, kind voices ! where are ye, where ?

Shadow not forth, O thou land of dreams,
 The past, as it fled by my own blue streams !
 Make not my spirit within me burn
 For the scenes and the hours that may ne'er return !

Call out from the *future* thy visions bright,
 From the world o'er the grave, take thy solemn light,
 And oh ! with the loved, whom no more I see,
 Show me my home, as it yet may be !

As it yet may be in some purer sphere,
 No cloud, no parting, no sleepless fear ;
 So my soul may bear on through the long, long day,
 Till I go where the beautiful melts not away !

THE TWO HOMES.

" Oh ! if the soul immortal be,
 Is not its love immortal too ? "

SEEST thou my home ?—'tis where yon woods are waving,
 In their dark richness, to the summer air ;
 Where yon blue stream, a thousand flower-banks laving,
 Leads down the hills a vein of light,—'tis there !

'Midst those green wilds how many a fount lies gleaming,
 Fringed with the violet, colour'd with the skies !
 My boyhood's haunt, through days of summer dreaming,
 Under young leaves that shook with melodies.

My home ! the spirit of its love is breathing
 In every wind that plays across my track ;
 From its white walls the very tendrils wreathing,
 Seem with soft links to draw the wanderer back.

There am I loved—there pray'd for—there my mother
 Sits by the hearth with meekly thoughtful eye ;
 There my young sisters watch to greet their brother—
 Soon their glad footsteps down the path will fly.

There, in sweet strains of kindred music blending,
All the home-voices meet at day's decline ;
One are those tones, as from one heart ascending,—
There laughs *my* home—sad stranger ! where is thine ?

Ask'st thou of mine ?—In solemn peace 'tis lying,
Far o'er the deserts and the tombs away ;
'Tis where *I*, too, am loved with love undying,
And fond hearts wait my step—But where are they ?

Ask where the earth's departed have their dwelling ;
Ask of the clouds, the stars, the trackless air !
I know it not, yet trust the whisper, telling
My lonely heart, that love unchanged is there.

And what is home, and where, but with the loving ?
Happy *thou* art, that so canst gaze on thine !
My spirit feels but, in its weary roving,
That with the dead, where'er they be, is mine.

Go to thy home, rejoicing son and brother !
Bear in fresh gladness to the household scene !
For me, too, watch the sister and the mother,
I well believe—but dark seas roll between.

WOMAN ON THE FIELD OF BATTLE.

"Where hath not woman stood,
Strong in affection's might ? a reed, upborne
By an o'er-mastering current !"

GENTLE and lovely form,
What didst thou hear,
When the fierce battle-storm
Bore down the spear ?

Banner and shiver'd crest,
Beside thee strown,
Tell, that amidst the best,
Thy work was done !

Yet strangely, sadly fair,
O'er the wild scene,
Gleams, through its golden hair
That brow serene.

Woman on the Field of Battle.

Low lies the stately head,—
Earth-bound the free ;
How gave those haughty dead
A place to thee ?

Slumberer ! *thine* early bier
Friends should have crown'd,
Many a flower and tear
Shedding around.

Soft voices, clear and young,
Mingling their swell,
Should o'er thy dust have sung
Earth's last farewell.

Sisters, above the grave
Of thy repose,
Should have bid violets wave
With the white rose.

Now must the trumpet's note,
Savage and shrill,
For requiem o'er thee float,
Thou fair and still !

And the swift charger sweep,
In full career,
Trampling thy place of sleep,—
Why camest thou here ?

Why ?—ask the true heart why
Woman hath been
Ever, where brave men die,
Unshrinking seen ?

Unto this harvest ground
Proud reapers came,—
Some, for that stirring sound,
A warrior's name ;

Some, for the stormy play
And joy of strife ;
And some, to fling away
A weary life ;—

But thou, pale sleeper, thou,
With the slight frame,
And the rich locks, whose glow
Death cannot tame ;

Only one thought, one power,
~~The~~ could have led,
So, through the tempest's hour,
To lift thy head !

Only the true, the strong,
The love, whose trust
Woman's deep soul too long
Pours on the dust !

THE DESERTED HOUSE.

GLOOM is upon thy lonely hearth,
O silent house ! once fill'd with mirth ;
Sorrow is in the breezy sound
Of thy tall poplars whispering round.

The shadow of departed hours
Hangs dim upon thine early flowers ;
Even in thy sunshine seems to brood
Something more deep than solitude.

Fair art thou, fair to a stranger's gaze,
Mine own sweet home of other days !
My children's birth-place ! yet for me,
It is too much to look on thee.

Too much ! for all about thee spread,
I feel the memory of the dead,
And almost linger for the feet
That never more my step shall meet.

The looks, the smiles, all vanish'd now,
Follow me where thy roses blow ;
The echoes of kind household words
Are with me 'midst thy singing birds.

Till my heart dies, it dies away
In yearnings for what might not stay ;
For love which ne'er deceived my trust,
For all which went with "dust to dust !"

The Deserted House.

What now is left me, but to raise
 From thee, lorn spot ! my spirit's gaze,
 To lift, through tears, my straining eye
 Up to my Father's house on high ?

Oh ! many are the mansions there,*
 But not in one hath grief a share !
 No haunting shade from things gone by,
 May there o'ersweep th' unchanging sky.

And *they* are there, whose long-loved mien
 In earthly home no more is seen ;
 Whose places, where they smiling sate,
 Are left unto us desolate.

We miss them when the board is spread ;
 We miss them when the prayer is said .
 Upon our dreams their dying eyes
 In still and mournful fondness rise.

But they are where these longings vain
 Trouble no more the heart and brain ;
 The sadness of this aching love
 Dims not our Father's house above.

Ye are at rest, and I in tears,†
 Ye dwellers of immortal spheres
 Under the poplar boughs I stand,
 And mourn the broken household band.

But, by your life of lowly faith,
 And by your joyful hope in death,
 Guide me, till on some brighter shore,
 The sever'd wreath is bound once more !

Holy ye were, and good, and true !
 No change can cloud my thoughts of you
 Guide me, like you to live and die,
 And reach my Father's house on high !

* "In my Father's house there are many mansions."—*John*, c. xiv

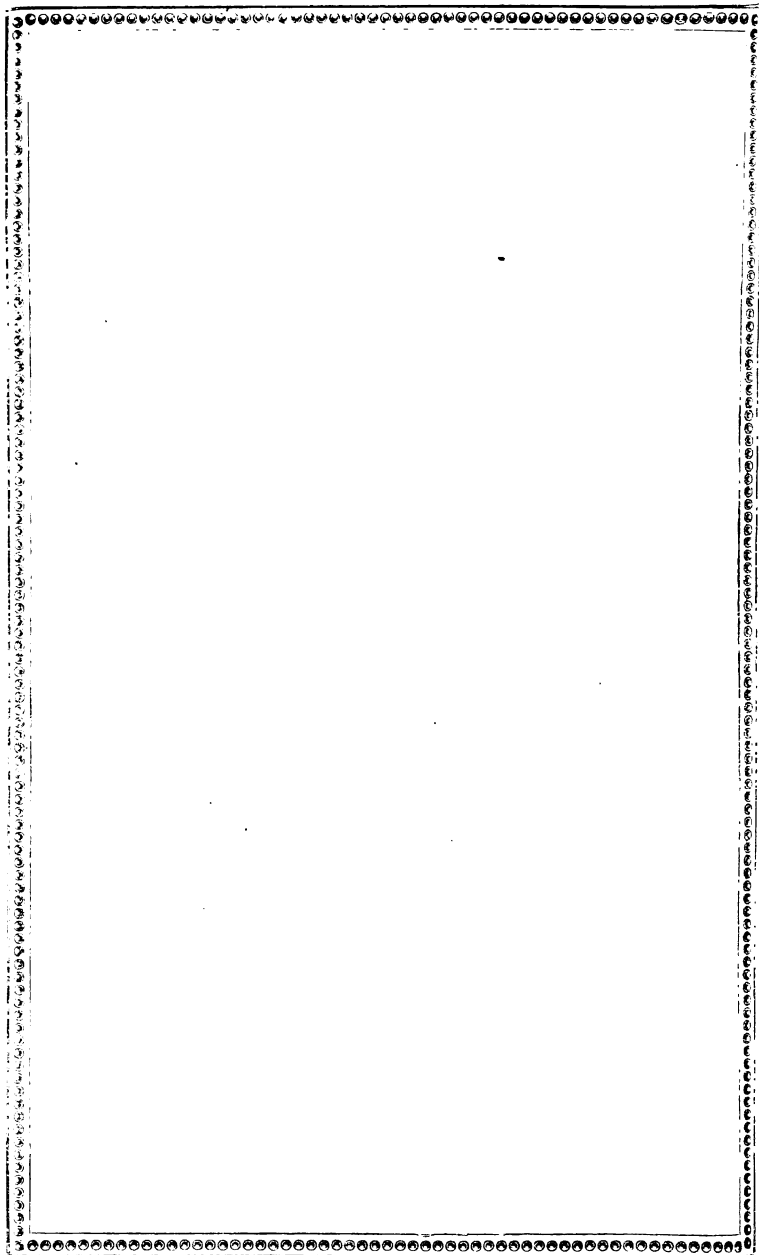
† From an ancient Hebrew dirge :—

Mourn for the mourner, and not for the dead
 For he is at rest, and we in tears !



" . . . Be holy, earth !
I am the solemn night ! "

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THE STRANGER'S HEART.

THE stranger's heart ! Oh ! wound it not !
A yearning anguish is its lot ;
In the green shadow of thy tree,
The stranger finds no rest with thee.

Thou think'st the vine's low rustling leaves
Glad music round thy household eaves ;
To him that sound hath sorrow's tone—
The stranger's heart is with his own.

Thou think'st thy children's laughing play
A lovely sight at fall of day ;—
Then are the stranger's thoughts oppress'd—
His mother's voice comes o'er his breast.

Thou think'st it sweet when friend with friend
Beneath one roof in prayer may blend ;
Then doth the stranger's eye grow dim—
Far, far are those who pray'd with him.—

Thy hearth, thy home, thy vintage land—
The voices of thy kindred band—
Oh ! 'midst them all when blest thou art,
Deal gently with the stranger's heart !

COME HOME !

COME home !—there is a sorrowing breath
In music since ye went,
And the early flower-scents wander by,
With mournful memories blent.
The tones in every household voice
Are grown more sad and deep,
And the sweet word—*brother*—wakes a wish
To turn aside and weep.

O ye Beloved ! come home !—the hour
Of many a greeting tone,
The time of hearth-light and of song,
Returns—and ye are gone !

And darkly, heavily it falls
 On the forsaken room,
 Burdening the heart with tenderness,
 That deepens 'midst the gloom.

Where finds it *you*, ye wandering ones?
 With all your boyhood's glee
 Untamed, beneath the desert's palm,
 Or on the lone mid-sea?
 By stormy hills of battles old?
 Or where dark rivers foam?—
 Oh! life is dim where ye are not—
 Back, ye beloved, come home!

Come with the leaves and winds of spring,
 And swift birds, o'er the main!
 Our love is grown too sorrowful—
 Bring us its youth again!
 Bring the glad tones to music back!
 Still, still your home is fair,
 The spirit of your sunny life
 Alone is wanting there!

THE FOUNTAIN OF OBLIVION.

*"Implora pace!"**

ONE draught, kind Fairy! from that fountain deep,
 To lay the phantoms of a haunted breast,
 And lone affections, which are griefs, to steep
 In the cool honey-dews of dreamless rest;
 And from the soul the lightning-marks to lave—
 One draught of that sweet wave!

Yet, mortal, pause!—within thy mind is laid
 Wealth, gather'd long and slowly; thoughts divine
 Heap that full treasure-house; and thou hast made
 The gems of many a spirit's ocean thine;
 Shall the dark waters to oblivion bear
 A pyramid so fair?

* Quoted from a letter of Lord Byron's. He describes the impression produced upon him by some tombs at Bologna, bearing this simple inscription, and adds, "When I die, I could wish that some friend would see these words, and no other, placed above my grave—'*Implora pace.*'"

Pour from the fount ! and let the draught efface
All the vain lore by memory's pride, amass'd,
So it but sweep along the torrent's trace,
And fill the hollow channels of the past :
And from the bosom's inmost folded leaf
Rase the one master-grief !

Yet pause once more !—all, *all* thy soul hath known,
Loved, felt, rejoiced in, from its grasp must fade !
Is there no voice whose kind awakening tone
A sense of spring-time in thy heart hath made ?
No eye whose glance thy day-dreams would recall ?—
Think—wouldst thou part with all ?

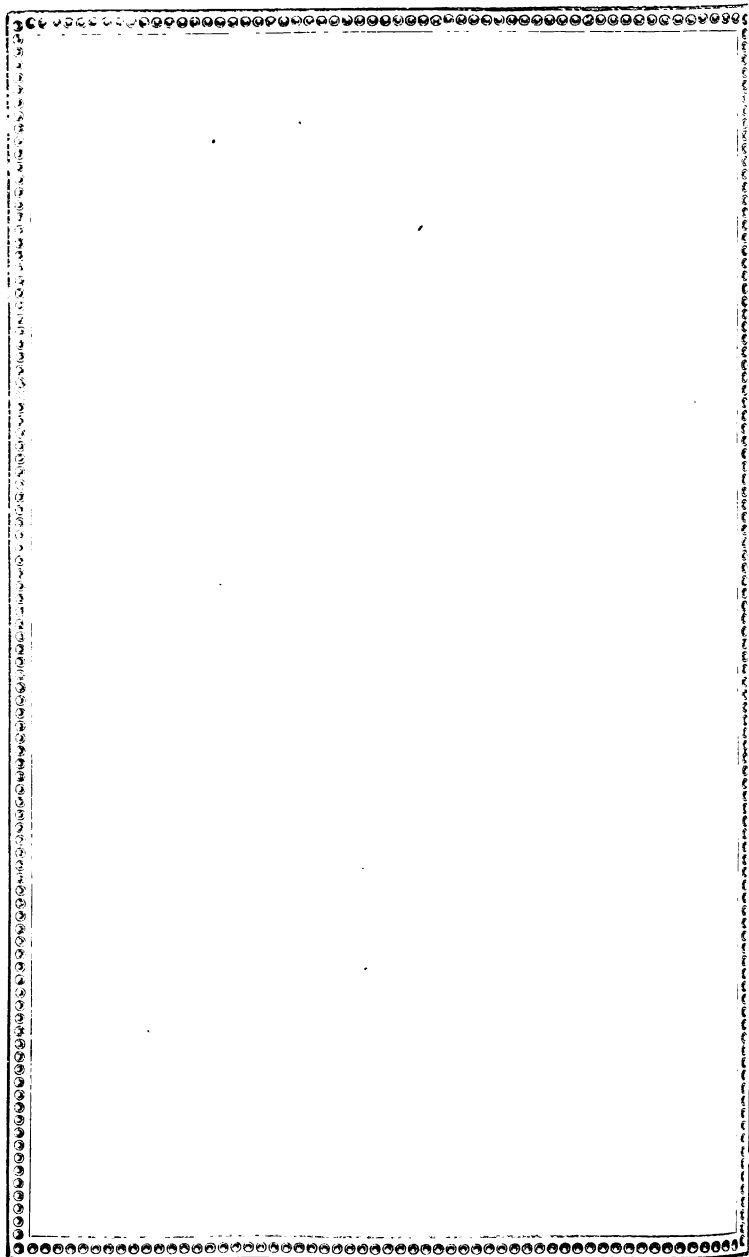
Fill with forgetfulness !—there are, there *are*
Voices whose music I have loved too well ;
Eyes of deep gentleness—but they are far—
Never ! oh—never, in my home to dwell !
Take their soft looks from off my yearning soul—
Fill high th' oblivious bowl !

Yet pause again !—with memory wilt thou cast
The undying hope away, of memory born ?
Hope of re-union, heart to heart at last,
No restless doubt between, no rankling thorn ?
Wouldst thou erase all records of delight
That make such visions bright ?

Fill with forgetfulness, fill high !—yet stay—
'Tis from the past we shadow forth the land
Where smiles, long lost, again shall light our way,
And the soul's friends be wreath'd in one bright band :—
Pour the sweet waters back on their own rill,
I *must* remember still.

For their sake, for the dead—whose image nought
May dim within the temple of my breast—
For their love's sake, which now no earthly thought
May shake or trouble with its own unrest,
Though the past haunt me as a spirit,—yet
I ask not to forget.







MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

THE BRIDAL DAY.

ON a monument in a Venetian church is an epitaph, recording that the remains beneath are those of a noble lady, who expired suddenly while standing as a bride at the altar.

"We bear her home ! we bear her home !
Over the murmuring salt sea's foam ;
One who has fled from the war of life,
From sorrow, pain, and the fever strife."

BARRY CORNWALL.

BRIDE ! upon thy marriage-day,
When thy gems in rich array
Made the glistening mirror seem
As a star-reflecting stream ;
When the clustering pearls lay fair
'Midst thy braids of sunny hair,
And the white veil o'er thee streaming,
Like a silvery halo gleaming,
Mellow'd all that pomp and light
Into something meekly bright ;
Did the fluttering of thy breath
Speak of joy or woe beneath ?
And the hue that went and came
O'er thy cheek, like wavering flame,
Flow'd that crimson from th' unrest,
Or the gladness of thy breast ?—
Who shall tell us ?—from thy bower,
Brightly didst thou pass that hour ;
With the many-glancing oar,
And the cheer along the shore,
And the wealth of summer flowers
On thy fair head cast in showers,

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And the breath of song and flute,
 And the clarion's glad salute,
 Swiftly o'er the Adrian tide
 Wert thou borne in pomp, young bride !
 Mirth and music, sun and sky,
 Welcomed thee triumphantly !
 Yet, perchance, a chastening thought,
 In some deeper spirit wrought,
 Whispering, as untold it blent
 With the sounds of merriment,—
 "From the home of childhood's glee,
 From the days of laughter free,
 From the love of many years,
 Thou art gone to cares and fears ;
 To another path and guide,
 To a bosom yet untried !
 Bright one ! oh ! there well may be
 Trembling 'midst our joy for thee."

Bride ! when through the stately fane,
 Circled with thy nuptial train,
 'Midst the banners hung on high
 By thy warrior-ancestry,
 'Midst those mighty fathers dead,
 In soft beauty thou wast led ;
 When before the shrine thy form
 Quiver'd to some bosom storm,
 When, like harp-strings with a sigh
 Breaking in mid-harmony,
 On thy lip the murmurs low
 Died with love's unfinish'd vow ;
 When, like scatter'd rose-leaves, fled
 From thy cheek each tint of red,
 And the light forsook thine eye,
 And thy head sank heavily ;
 Was that drooping but th' excess
 Of thy spirit's blessedness ?
 Or did some deep feeling's might,
 Folded in thy heart from sight,
 With a sudden tempest shower,
 Earthward bear thy life's young flower ?—
 Who shall tell us ?—on *thy* tongue
 Silence, and for ever, hung !
 Never to thy lip and cheek
 Rush'd again the crimson streak,
 Never to thine eye return'd
 That which there had beam'd and burn'd !

With the secret none might know,
With thy rapture or thy woe,
With thy marriage-robe and wreath,
Thou wert fled, young bride of death !
One, one lightning moment there
Struck down triumph to despair,
Beauty, splendour, hope, and trust,
Into darkness—terror—dust !

There were sounds of weeping o'er thee,
Bride ! as forth thy kindred bore thee,
Shrouded in thy gleaming veil,
Deaf to that wild funeral wail.
Yet perchance a chastening thought,
In some deeper spirit wrought,
Whispering, while the stern sad knell
On the air's bright stillness fell ;—
" From the power of chill and change
Souls to sever and estrange ;
From love's wane—a death in life
But to watch—a mortal strife ;
From the secret fevers known
To the burning heart alone,
Thou art fled—afar, away—
Where these blights no more have sway !
Bright one ! oh ! there well may be
Comfort 'midst our tears for thee ! "

THE ANCESTRAL SONG.

" A long war disturb'd your mind—
Here your perfect peace is sign'd :
'Tis now full tide 'twixt night and day,
End your moan, and come away ! "

WEBSTER—*Duchess of Melfy.*

THERE were faint sounds of weeping ;—fear and gloom
And midnight vigil in a stately room
Of Lusignan's old halls :—rich odours there
Fill'd the proud chamber as with Indian air,
And soft light fell, from lamps of silver thrown,
On jewels that with rainbow lustre shone.
Over a gorgeous couch :—there emeralds gleam'd,
And deeper crimson from the ruby stream'd

Than in the heart-leaf of the rose is set,
Hiding from sunshine. — Many a carcanet
Starry with diamonds, many a burning chain
Of the red gold, sent forth a radiance vain,
And sad, and strange, the canopy beneath
Whose shadowy curtains, round a bed of death,
Hung drooping solemnly ;—for there one lay,
Passing from all Earth's glories fast away,
Amidst those queenly treasures : They had been
Gifts of her lord, from far-off Paynin lands,
And for *his* sake, upon their orient sheen
She had gazed fondly, and with faint, cold hands
Had press'd them to her languid heart once more,
Melting in childlike tears. But this was o'er—
Love's last vain clinging unto life ; and now—
A mist of dreams was hovering o'er her brow,
Her eye was fix'd, her spirit seem'd removed,
Though not from Earth, from all it knew or loved,
Far, far away ! her handmaids watch'd around,
In awe, that lent to each low midnight sound
A might, a mystery ; and the quivering light
Of wind-sway'd lamps, made spectral in their sight
The forms of buried beauty, sad, yet fair,
Gleaming along the walls with braided hair,
Long in the dust grown dim ; and she, too, saw,
But with the spirit's eye of raptured awe,
Those pictured shapes !—a bright, yet solemn train,
Beckoning, they floated o'er her dreamy brain,
Clothed in diviner hues ; while on her ear
Strange voices fell, which none besides might hear,
Sweet, yet profoundly mournful, as the sigh
Of winds o'er harp-strings through a midnight sky ;
And thus it seem'd, in that low thrilling tone,
Th' ancestral shadows call'd away their own.

Come, come, come !
Long thy fainting soul hath yearn'd
For the step that ne'er return'd ;
Long thine anxious ear hath listen'd,
And thy watchful eye hath glisten'd
With the hope, whose parting strife
Shook the flower-leaves from thy life—
Now the heavy day is done,
Home awaits thee, wearied one !
Come, come, come .

From the quenchless thoughts that burn
In the seal'd heart's lonely urn ;

From the coil of memory's chain
Wound about the throbbing brain ;
From the veins of sorrow deep,
Winding through the world of sleep ;
From the haunted halls and bowers,
Throng'd with ghosts of happier hours !
Come, come, come !

On our dim and distant shore
Aching love is felt no more !
We have loved with earth's excess—
Past is now that weariness !
We have wept, that weep not now—
Calm is each once beating brow !
We have known the dreamer's woes—
All is now one bright repose !
Come, come, come !

Weary heart that long hast bled,
Languid spirit, drooping head,
Restless memory, vain regret,
Pining love whose light is set,
Come away !—'tis hush'd, 'tis well !
Where by shadowy founts we dwell,
All the fever-thirst is still'd,
All the air with peace is fill'd,—
Come, come, come !

And with her spirit rapt in that wild lay.
She pass'd, as twilight melts to night, away !

THE MAGIC GLASS.

"How lived, how loved, how died they?"—BYRON.

"THE Dead ! the glorious Dead !—And shall they rise ?
Shall they look on thee with their proud bright eyes ?
Thou ask'st a fearful spell !
Yet say, from shrine or dim sepulchral hall,
What kingly vision shall obey my call ?
The deep grave knows it well !

"Wouldst thou behold earth's conquerors? shall they pass
Before thee, flushing all the Magic Glass

With triumph's long array?
Speak! and those dwellers of the marble urn,
Robed for the feast of victory, shall return,
As on their proudest day.

"Or wouldst thou look upon the lords of song?—
O'er the dark mirror that immortal throng
Shall waft a solemn gleam!
Passing, with lighted eyes and radiant brows,
Under the foliage of green laurel-boughs,
But silent as a dream."

"Not these, O mighty master!—Though their lays
Be unto man's free heart, and tears, and praise,
Hallow'd for evermore!
And not the buried conquerors! Let them sleep,
And let the flowery earth her Sabbaths keep
In joy, from shore to shore!

"But, if the narrow house may so be moved.
Call the bright shadows of the most beloved,
Back from their couch of rest!
That I may learn if *their* meek eyes be fill'd
With peace, if human love hath ever still'd
The yearning human breast."

"Away, fond youth!—An idle quest is thine;
These have no trophy, no memorial shrine;
I know not of their place!
'Midst the dim valleys, with a secret flow,
Their lives, like shepherd reed-notes, faint and low,
Have pass'd, and left no trace.

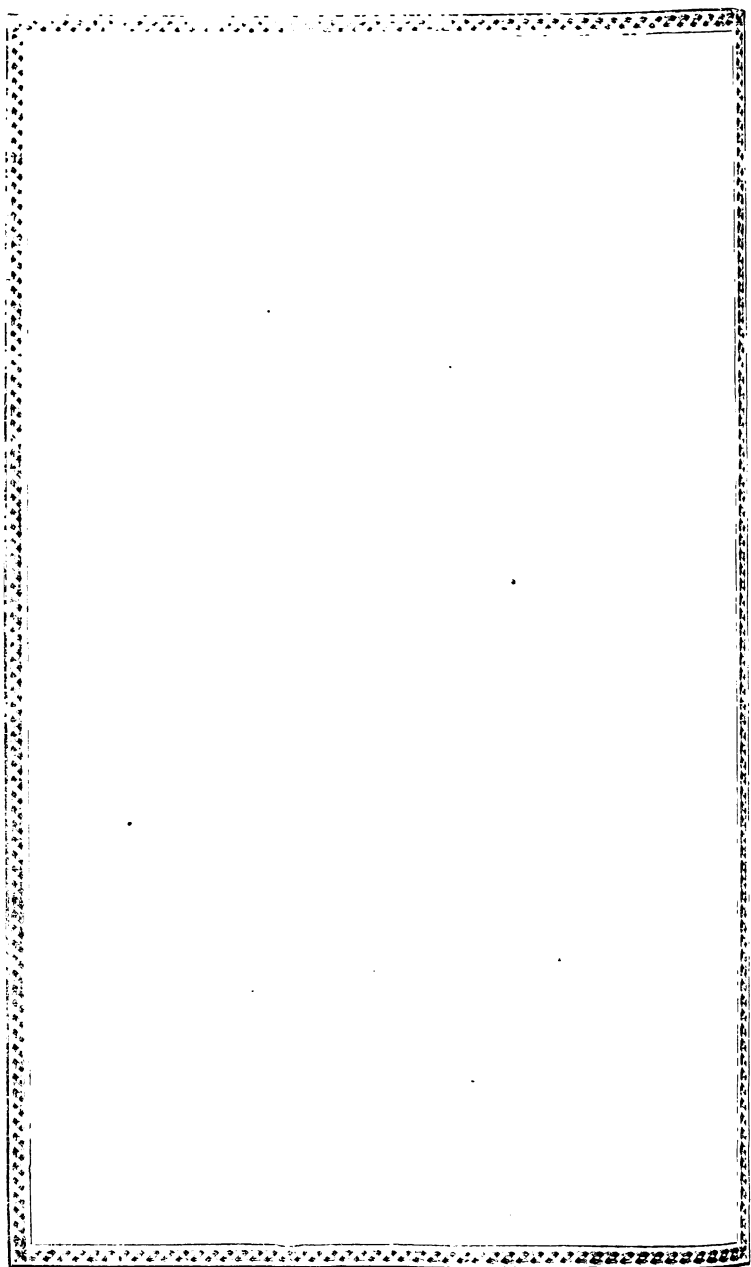
"Haply, begirt with shadowy woods and hills,
And the wild sounds of melancholy rills,
Their covering turf may bloom;
But ne'er hath Fame made relics of its flowers,—
Never hath pilgrim sought their household bowers,
Or poet hail'd their tomb."

"Adieu, then, master of the midnight spell!
Some voice, perchance, by those lone graves may tell
That which I pine to know!
I haste to seek, from woods and valleys deep,
Where the beloved are laid in lowly sleep,
Records of joy and woe."



"Take with thee gentle winds thy sails to swell."

[A. 565.]



CORINNE AT THE CAPITOL.

¹ Les femmes doivent penser qu'il est dans cette carrière bien peu de sorte qui puissent valoir la plus obscure vie d'une femme aimée et d'une mère heureuse."
—MADAME DE STAËL.

DAUGHTER of th' Italian heaven !
'Thou, to whom its fires are given,
Joyously thy car hath roll'd
Where the conqueror's pass'd of old ;
And the festal sun that shone,
O'er three * hundred triumphs gone
Makes thy day of glory bright,
With a shower of golden light.

Now thou tread'st th' ascending road,
Freedom's foot so proudly trode ;
While, from tombs of heroes borne
From the dust of empire shorn,
Flowers upon thy graceful head,
Chaplets of all hues, are shed,
In a soft and rosy rain,
Touch'd with many a gemlike stain.

Thou hast gain'd the summit now !
Music hails thee from below ;—
Music, whose rich notes might stir
Ashes of the sepulchre ;
Shaking with victorious notes
All the bright air as it floats.
Well may woman's heart beat high
Unto that proud harmony !

Now afar it rolls—it dies—
And thy voice is heard to rise
With a low and lovely tone
In its thrilling power alone ;
And thy lyre's deep silvery string,
Touch'd as by a breeze's wing,
Murmurs tremblingly at first,
Ere the tide of rapture burst.

* "The trebly hundred triumphs."—BYRON.

All the spirit of thy sky
 Now hath lit thy large dark eye,
 And thy cheek a flush hath caught
 From the joy of kindled thought ;
 And the burning words of song
 From thy lip flow fast and strong,
 With a rushing stream's delight
 In the freedom of its might.

Radiant daughter of the sun !
 Now thy living wreath is won.
 Crown'd of Rome !—Oh ! art thou not
 Happy in that glorious lot ?—
 Happier, happier far than thou,
 With the laurel on thy brow,
 She that makes the humblest hearth
 Lovely but to one on earth !

THE RUIN.

"OH ! 'tis the *heart* that magnifies this life,
 Making a truth and beauty of its own."

WORDSWORTH.

"Birth has gladden'd it : Death has sanctified it."

Guesses at Truth.

No dower of storied song is thine,
 O desolate abode !
 Forth from thy gates no glittering line
 Of lance and spear hath flow'd.
 Banners of knighthood have not flung
 Proud drapery o'er thy walls,
 Nor bugle notes to battle rung
 Through thy resounding halls.

Nor have rich bowers of *pleasance* here
 By courtly hands been dress'd,
 For Princes, from the chase of deer,
 Under green leaves to rest :
 Only some rose, yet lingering bright
 Beside thy casements lone,
 Tells where the spirit of delight
 Hath dwelt, and now is gone.

Yet minstrel tale of harp and sword,
And sovereign beauty's lot,
House of quench'd light and silent board !
For me thou needest not.
It is enough to know that *here*,
Where thoughtfully I stand,
Sorrow and love, and hope and fear,
Have link'd one kindred band.

Thou bindest me with mighty spells !—
A solemnizing breath,
A presence all around thee dwells,
Of human life and death.
I need but pluck yon garden flower
From where the wild weeds rise,
To wake, with strange and sudden power,
A thousand sympathies.

Thou hast heard many sounds, thou hearth !
Deserted now by all !
Voices at eve here meet in mirth
Which eve may ne'er recall.
Youth's buoyant step, and woman's tone,
And childhood's laughing glee,
And song and prayer, have all been known,
Hearth of the dead ! to thee.

Thou hast heard blessings fondly pour'd
Upon the infant head,
As if in every fervent word
The living soul were shed ;
Thou hast seen partings, such as bear
The bloom from life away—
Alas ! for love in changeful air,
Where nought beloved can stay !

Here, by the restless bed of pain,
The vigil hath been kept,
Till sunrise, bright with hope in vain,
Burst forth on eyes that wept :
Here hath been felt the hush, the gloom,
The breathless influence, shed
Through the dim dwelling, from the room
Wherein reposed the dead.

The seat left void, the missing face,
 Have here been mark'd and mourn'd,
 And time hath fill'd the vacant place,
 And gladness hath return'd ;
 Till from the narrowing household chain
 The links dropp'd one by one !
 And homewards hither, o'er the main,
 Came the spring-birds alone.

Is there not cause, then—cause for thought,
 Fix'd eye and lingering tread,
 Where, with their thousand mysteries fraught,
 Ev'n lowliest hearts have bled ?
 Where, in its ever-haunting thirst
 For draughts of purer day,
 Man's soul, with fitful strength, hath burst
 The clouds that wrapt its way ?

Holy to human nature seems
 The long-forsaken spot ;
 To deep affections, tender dreams,
 Hopes of a brighter lot !
 Therefore in silent reverence here,
 Hearth of the dead ! I stand,
 Where joy and sorrow, smile and tear,
 Have link'd one household band.

THE MINSTER.

"A FIT abode, wherein appear enshrined
 Our hopes of immortality."

BYRON.

SPEAK low !—the place is holy to the breath
 Of awful harmonies, of whisper'd prayer ;
 Tread lightly !—for the sanctity of death
 Broods with a voiceless influence on the air :
 Stern, yet serene !—a reconciling spell,
 Each troubled billow of the soul to quell.

Leave me to linger silently awhile !—
 Not for the light that pours its fervid streams
 Of rainbow glory down through arch and aisle,
 Kindling old banners into haughty gleams,
 Flushing proud shrines, or by some warrior's tomb
 Dying away in clouds of gorgeous gloom :

Not for rich music, though in triumph pealing,
Mighty as forest sounds when winds are high ;
Nor yet for torch, and cross, and stole, revealing
Through incense-mists their sainted pageantry :—
Though o'er the spirit each hath charm and power,
Yet not for *these* I ask one lingering hour.

But by strong sympathies, whose silver chord
Links me to mortal weal, my soul is bound ;
Thoughts of the human hearts, that here have pour'd
Their anguish forth, are with me and around ;—
I look back on the pangs, the burning tears,
Known to these altars of a thousand years.

Send up a murmur from the dust, Remorse !
That here hast bow'd with ashes on thy head ;
And thou, still battling with the tempest's force—
Thou, whose bright spirit through all time has bled—
Speak, wounded Love ! if penance here, or prayer,
Hath laid one haunting shadow of despair ?

No voice, no breath !—of conflicts past, no trace !—
Doth not this hush give answer to my quest ?
Surely the dread religion of the place
By every grief hath made its mystic confest !—
Oh ! that within my heart I could but keep
Holy to Heaven, a spot thus pure, and still, and deep !

THE SONG OF NIGHT.

“ Oh, night,
And storm and darkness ! ye are wondrous strong,
Yet lovely in your strength.”

BYRON.

I COME to thee, O Earth !
With all my gifts !—for every flower sweet dew,
In bell, and urn, and chalice, to renew
The glory of its birth.

Not one which glimmering lies
Far amidst folding hills, or forest leaves,
But, through its veins of beauty, so receives
A spirit of fresh dyes.

The Song of Nixit.

I come with every star ;
Making thy streams, that on their noon-day track,
Give but the moss, the reed, the lily back,
Mirrors of worlds afar.

I come with peace ;—I shed
Sleep through thy wood-walks, o'er the honey-bee,
The lark's triumphant voice, the fawn's young glee,
The hyacinth's meek head.

On my own heart I lay
The weary babe ; and sealing with a breath
Its eyes of love, send fairy dreams, beneath
The shadowing lids to play.

I come with mightier things !
Who calls me silent ? I have many tones—
The dark skies thrill with low, mysterious moans,
Borne on my sweeping wings.

I waft them not alone
From the deep organ of the forest shades,
Or buried streams, unheard amidst their glades,
Till the bright day is done ;

But in the human breast
A thousand still small voices I awake,
Strong, in their sweetness, from the soul to shake
The mantle of its rest.

I bring them from the past :
From true hearts broken, gentle spirits torn,
From crush'd affections, which, though long o'erborne,
Make their tones heard at last.

I bring them from the tomb :
O'er the sad couch of late repentant love
They pass—though low as murmurs of a dove—
Like trumpets through the gloom.

I come with all my train :
Who calls me lonely ?—Hosts around me tread,
The intensely bright, the beautiful,—the dead,—
Phantoms of heart and brain.

Looks from departed eyes—
These are my lightnings !—fill'd with anguish vain,
Or tenderness too piercing to sustain,
They smite with agonies.

I, that with soft control,
Shut the dim violet, hush the woodland song,
I am the avenging one ! the arm'd—the strong,
The searcher of the soul !

I, that shower dewy light
Through slumbering leaves, bring storms !—the tempest-
birth
Of memory, thought, remorse :—Be holy, earth !
I am the solemn night !

THE STORM-PAINTER* IN HIS DUNGEON.

“WHERE of ye, O tempests ! is the goal?
Are ye like those that shake the human breast?
Or do ye find at length, like eagles, some high nest?

Childe Harold.

MIDNIGHT, and silence deep !—
The air is fill'd with sleep,
With the stream's whisper, and the citron's breath ;
The fix'd and solemn stars
Gleam through my dungeon bars—
Wake, rushing wind ! this breezeless calm is death !

Ye watch-fires of the skies !
The stillness of your eyes
Looks too intensely through my troubled soul :
I feel this weight of rest
An earth-load on my breast—
Wake, rushing winds, awake ! and, dark clouds, roll !

I am your own, *your* child,
O ye, the fierce and wild
And kingly tempests !—will ye not arise ?
Hear the bold spirit's voice,
That knows not to rejoice
But in the peal of your strong harmonies.

* Pietro Mulier, call'd Il Tempesta, from his surprising pictures of storms. “His compositions,” says Lanzi, “inspire a real horror, presenting to our eyes death-devoted ships overtaken by tempests and darkness ; fired by lightning ; now rising on the mountain-wave, and again submerged in the abyss of ocean.” During an imprisonment of five years in Genoa, the pictures which he painted in his dungeon were marked by additional power and gloom.—See LANZI'S *History of Painting*, translated by ROSCON.

By sounding ocean-waves,
And dim Calabrian caves,
And flashing torrents, I have been your mate ;
And with the rocking pines
Of the olden Apennines,
In your dark path stood fearless and elate :

Your lightnings were as rods,
That smote the deep abodes
Of thought and vision—and the stream gush'd free :
Come, that my soul again
May swell to burst its chain—
Bring me the music of the sweeping sea !

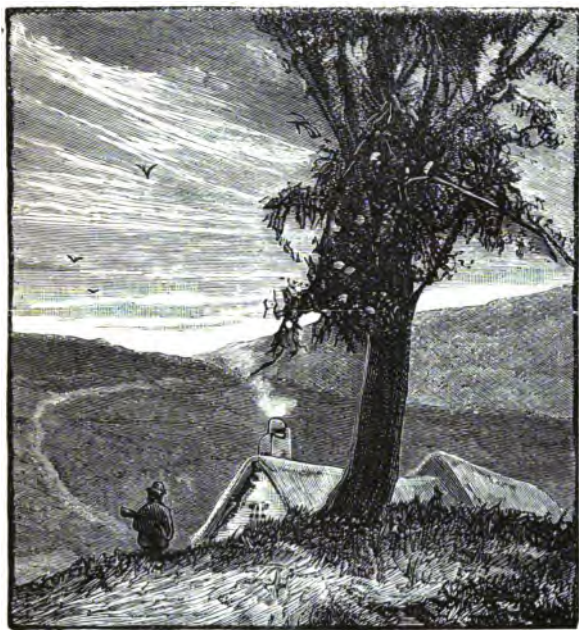
Within me dwells a flame,
An eagle caged and tame,
Till call'd forth by the harping of the blast ;
Then is its triumph's hour,
It springs to sudden power,
As mounts the billow o'er the quivering mast.

Then, then, the canvas o'er,
With hurried hand I pour
The lava-waves and gusts of my own soul !
Kindling to fiery life
Dreams, worlds, of pictured strife ;—
Wake, rushing winds, awake ! and, dark clouds, roll !

Wake, rise ! the reed may bend,
The shivering leaf descend,
The forest branch give way before your might ;
But I, your strong compeer,
Call, summon, wait you here, —
Answer, my spirit !—answer, storm and night !

DEATH AND THE WARRIOR.

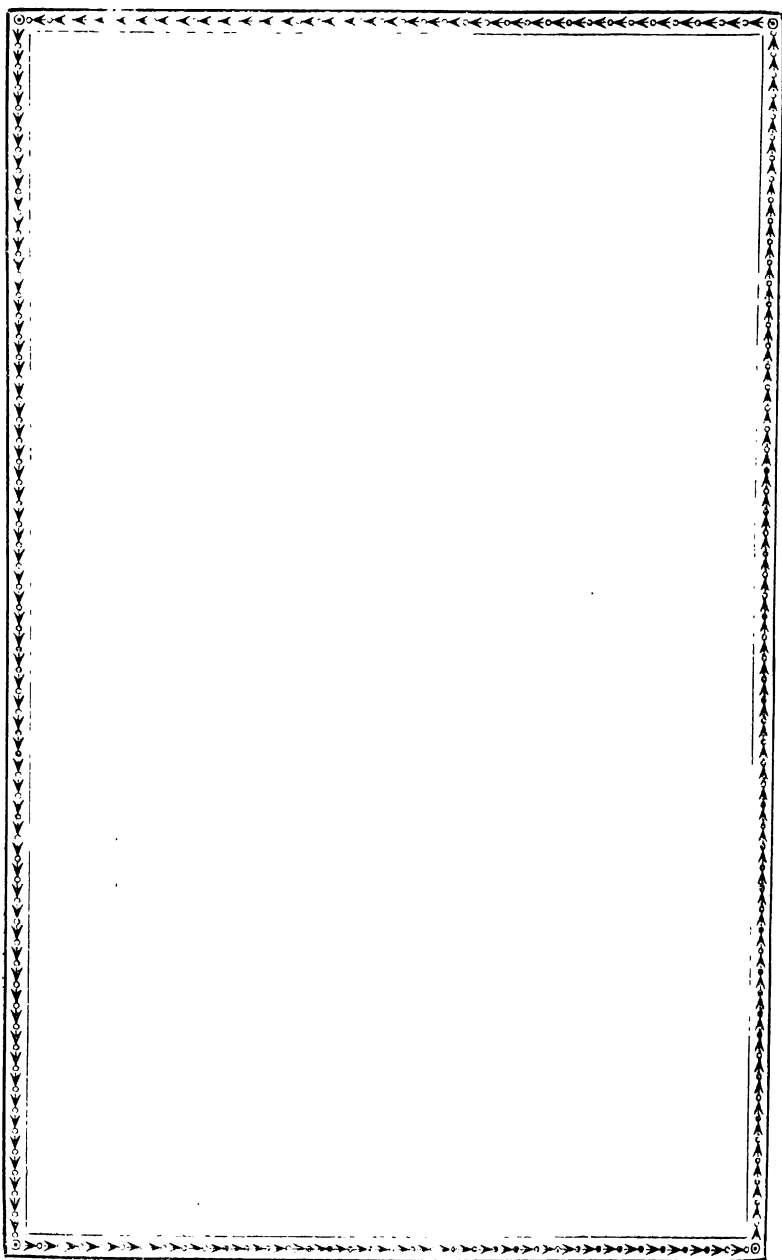
“AY, Warrior, arm ! and wear thy plume
On a proud and fearless brow !
I am the lord of the lonely tomb,
And a mightier one than thou !



"Whisper, thou Tree, thou lonely Tree,
One, where a thousand stood!"

[p. 566.]

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"Bid thy soul's love farewell, young chief,
Bid her a long farewell !
Like the morning's dew shall pass that grief—
Thou comest with me to dwell !

"Thy bark may rush through the foaming deep
Thy steed o'er the breezy hill ;
But they bear thee on to a place of sleep,
Narrow, and cold, and chill !"

"Was the voice I heard, thy voice, oh Death ?
And is thy day so near ?
Then on the field shall my life's last breath
Mingle with victory's cheer !

"Banners shall float, with the trumpet's note,
Above me as I die !
And the palm-tree wave o'er my noble grave,
Under the Syrian sky.

"High hearts shall burn in the royal hall
When the minstrel names that spot ;
And the eyes I love shall weep my fall,
Death, Death ! I fear thee not !"

"Warrior ! thou bearest a haughty heart ;
But I can bend its pride !
How shouldst thou know that thy soul will part
In the hour of victory's tide ?

"It may be far from thy steel-clad bands,
That I shall make thee mine ;
It may be lone on the desert sands,
Where men for fountains pine !

"It may be deep amidst heavy chains
In some strong Paynim hold ;—
I have slow dull steps and lingering pains,
Wherewith to tame the bold !"

"Death, Death ! I go to a doom unblest,
If this indeed must be ;
But the cross is bound upon my breast,
And I may not shrink for thee !

"Sound, clarion, sound !—for my vows are given
To the cause of the holy shrine :
I bow my soul to the will of Heaven,
O Death !—and not to thine !"

THE TWO VOICES.

Two solemn Voices, in a funeral strain,
Met as rich sunbeams and dark bursts of rain
Meet in the sky ;
"Thou art gone hence !" one sang ; "Our light is flown,
Our beautiful, that seem'd too much our own,
Ever to die !

"Thou art gone hence !—our joyous hills among
Never again to pour thy soul in song,
When spring-flowers rise !
Never the friend's familiar step to meet
With loving laughter, and the welcome sweet
Of thy glad eyes."

"Thou art gone home, gone *home* !" then, high and clear,
Warbled that other Voice : "Thou hast no tear
Again to shed.
Never to fold the robe o'er secret pain,
Never, weigh'd down by Memory's clouds, again
To bow thy head.

"Thou art gone home ! oh ! early crown'd and blest ;
Where could the love of that deep heart find rest
With aught below ?
Thou must have seen rich dream by dream decay,
All the bright rose-leaves drop from life away—
Thrice blest to go !"

Yet sigh'd again that breeze-like Voice of grief—
"Thou art gone hence ! alas ! that aught so brief,
So loved should be !
Thou tak'st our summer hence !—the flower, the tone,
The music of our being, all in one,
Depart with thee !

"Fair form, young spirit, morning vision fled !
Canst *thou* be of the dead, the awful dead ?
The dark unknown ?
Yes ! to the dwelling where no footsteps fall,
Never again to light up hearth or hall,
Thy smile is gone !"

"Home, *home!*" once more th' exulting Voice arose :
"Thou art gone home ! from that divine repose
Never to roam !
Never to say farewell, to weep in vain,
To read of change, in eyes beloved, again—
Thou art gone home !

"By the bright waters now thy lot is cast,—
Joy for thee, happy friend ! thy bark hath past
The rough sea's foam !
Now the long yearnings of thy soul are still'd,—
Home ! home !—thy peace is won, thy heart is fill'd.—
Thou art gone home !"

THE PARTING SHIP.

"A GLITTERING ship that hath the plain
Of ocean for her own domain."

WORDSWORTH.

Go, in thy glory, o'er the ancient sea,
Take with thee gentle winds thy sails to swell ;
Sunshine and joy upon thy streamers be,—
Fare thee well, bark ! farewell !

Proudly the flashing billow thou hast cleft,
The breeze yet follows thee with cheer and song ;
Who now of storms hath dream or memory left ?
And yet the deep is strong !

But go thou triumphing, while still the smiles
Of summer tremble on the water's breast !
Thou shalt be greeted by a thousand isles,
In lone, wild beauty drest.

To thee a welcome, breathing o'er the tide,
The genii groves of Araby shall pour ;
Waves that enfold the pearl shall bathe thy side,
On the old Indian shore.

Oft shall the shadow of the palm-tree lie
O'er glassy bays wherein thy sails are furl'd,
And its leaves whisper, as the wind sweeps by,
Tales of the elder world.

The Last Tree of the Forest.

Oft shall the burning stars of Southern skies,
On the mid-ocean see thee chain'd in sleep,
A lonely home for human thoughts and ties,
Between the heavens and deep

Blue seas that roll on gorgeous coasts renown'd,
By night shall sparkle where thy prow makes way ;
Strange creatures of the abyss that none may sound,
In thy broad wake shall play.

From hills unknown, in mingled joy and fear,
Free dusky tribes shall pour, thy flag to mark ;—
Blessings go with thee on thy lone career !
Hail, and farewell, thou bark !

A long farewell !—Thou wilt not bring us back,
All whom thou bearest far from home and hearth ;
Many are thine, whose steps no more shall track
Their own sweet native earth !

Some wilt thou leave beneath the plantain's shade,
Where through the foliage Indian suns look bright ;
Some, in the snows of wintry regions laid,
By the cold northern light.

And some, far down below the sounding wave,—
Still shall they lie, though tempests o'er them sweep ;
Never may flower be strewn above their grave,
Never may sister weep !

And thou—the billow's queen—even thy proud form
On our glad sight no more perchance may swell ;
Yet God alike is in the calm and storm—
Fare thee well, bark ! farewell !

THE LAST TREE OF THE FOREST

WHISPER, thou Tree, thou lonely Tree
One, where a thousand stood !
Well might proud tales be told by thee,
Last of the solemn wood !

Dwells there no voice amidst thy boughs,
With leaves yet darkly green ?
Stillness is round, and noontide glows—
Tell us what thou hast seen.

- "I have seen the forest shadows lie
Where men now reap the corn ;
I have seen the kingly chase rush by,
Through the deep glades at morn.
- "With the glance of many a gallant spear,
And the wave of many a plume,
And the bounding of a hundred deer,
It hath lit the woodland's gloom.
- "I have seen the knight and his train ride past,
With his banner borne on high ;
O'er all my leaves there was brightness cast
From his gleaming panoply.
- "The Pilgrim at my feet hath laid
His palm branch 'midst the flowers,
And told his beads, and meekly pray'd,
Kneeling, at vesper-hours.
- "And the merry-men of wild and glen,
In the green array they wore,
Have feasted here with the red wine's cheer,
And the hunter's song of yore.
- "And the minstrel, resting in my shade,
Hath made the forest ring
With the lordly tales of the high Crusade,
Once loved by chief and king.
- "But now the noble forms are gone,
That walk'd the earth of old ;
The soft wind hath a mournful tone,
The sunny light looks cold.
- "There is no glory left us now,
Like the glory with the dead :—
I would that where they slumber low
My latest leaves were shed !"
- Oh ! thou dark Tree, thou lonely Tree,
That mournest for the past !
A peasant's home in thy shades I see,
Embower'd from every blast.
- A lovely and a mirthful sound
Of laughter meets mine ear ;
For the poor man's children sport around
On the turf, with naught to fear.

And roses lend that cabin's wall
 A happy summer-glow ;
 And the open door stands free to all,
 For it recks not of a foe.

And the village bells are on the breeze,
 That stirs thy leaf, dark Tree !
 How can I mourn, 'midst things like these,
 For the stormy past, with thee ?

THE STREAMS.

"THE power, the beauty, and the majesty,
 That had their haunts in dale or piny mountain,
 Or forests by slow stream, or pebbly spring,
 Or chasms and watery depths ; all those have vanish'd !
 They live no longer in the faith of heaven,
 But still the heart doth need a language !"

COLERIDGE'S *Wallenstein*.

YE have been holy, O founts and floods !
 Ye of the ancient and solemn woods,
 Ye that are born of the valleys deep,
 With the water-flowers on your breast asleep,
 And ye that gush from the sounding caves—
 Hallow'd have been your waves.

Hallow'd by man, in his dreams of old,
 Unto beings not of this mortal mould
 Viewless, and deathless, and wondrous powers,
 Whose voice he heard in his lonely hours,
 And sought with its fancied sound to still
 The heart earth could not fill.

Therefore the flowers of bright summers gone,
 O'er your sweet waters, ye streams ! were thrown
 Thousands of gifts, to the unny sea
 Have ye swept along in your wanderings free,
 And thrill'd to the murmur of many a vow—
 Where all is silent now !

Nor seems it strange that the heart hath been
 So link'd in love to your margins green ;
 That still, though ruin'd, your early shrines
 In beauty gleam through the southern vines,
 And the ivied chapels of colder skies,
 On your wild banks arise.

For the loveliest scenes of the glowing earth,
Are those, bright streams ! where your springs have birth;
Whether their cavern'd murmur fills,
With a tone of plaint, the hollow hills,
Or the glad sweet laugh of their healthful flow
Is heard 'midst the hamlets low.

Or whether ye gladden the desert-sands,
With a joyous music to Pilgrim bands,
And a flash from under some ancient rock,
Where a shepherd-king might have watch'd his flock,
Where a few lone palm-trees lift their heads,
And a green Acacia spreads.

Or whether, in bright old lands renown'd,
The laurels thrill to your first-born sound,
And the shadow, flung from the Grecian pine,
Sweeps with the breeze o'er your gleaming line,
And the tall reeds whisper to your waves,
Beside heroic graves.

Voices and lights of the lonely place !
By the freshest fern your path we trace ;
By the brightest cups on the emerald moss,
Whose fairy goblets the turf emboss,
By the rainbow-glancing of insect-wings,
In a thousand mazy rings.

There sucks the bee, for the richest flowers
Are all your own through the summer-hours ;
There the proud stag his fair image knows,
Traced on your glass beneath alder-boughs,
And the Halcyon's breast, like the skies array'd,
Gleams through the willow-shade.

But the wild sweet tales, that with elves and fays
Peopled your banks in the olden days,
And the memory left by departed love,
To your antique founts in glen and grove,
And the glory born of the poet's dreams—
These are your charms, bright streams !

Now is the time of your flowery rites,
Gone by with its dances and young delights :
From your marble urns ye have burst away,
From your chapel-cells to the laughing day ;
Low lie your altars with moss o'ergrown,—
And the woods again are lone.

Yet holy still be your living springs,
 Haunts of all gentle and glad some things !
 Holy, to converse with nature's lore,
 That gives the worn spirit its youth once more,
 And to silent thoughts of the love divine,
 Making the heart a shrine !

THE VOICE OF THE WIND.

"THERE is nothing in the wide world so like the voice of a spirit."

GRAY'S *Letters*.

OH ! many a voice is thine, thou Wind ! full many a voice is thine,
 From every scene thy wing o'ersweeps thou bear'st a sound and
 sign ;

A minstrel wild and strong thou art, with a mastery all thine own,
 And the spirit is thy harp, O Wind ! that gives the answering tone.

Thou hast been across red fields of war, where shiver'd helmets lie,
 And thou bringest thence the thrilling note of a clarion in the sky ;
 A rustling of proud banner-folds, a peal of stormy drums, —
 All these are in thy music met, as when a leader comes.

Thou hast been o'er solitary seas, and from their wastes brought back
 Each noise of waters that awoke in the mystery of thy track ;
 The chime of low soft southern waves on some green palmy shore,
 The hollow roll of distant surge, the gather'd billows' roar.

Thou art come from forests dark and deep, thou mighty rushing
 Wind !

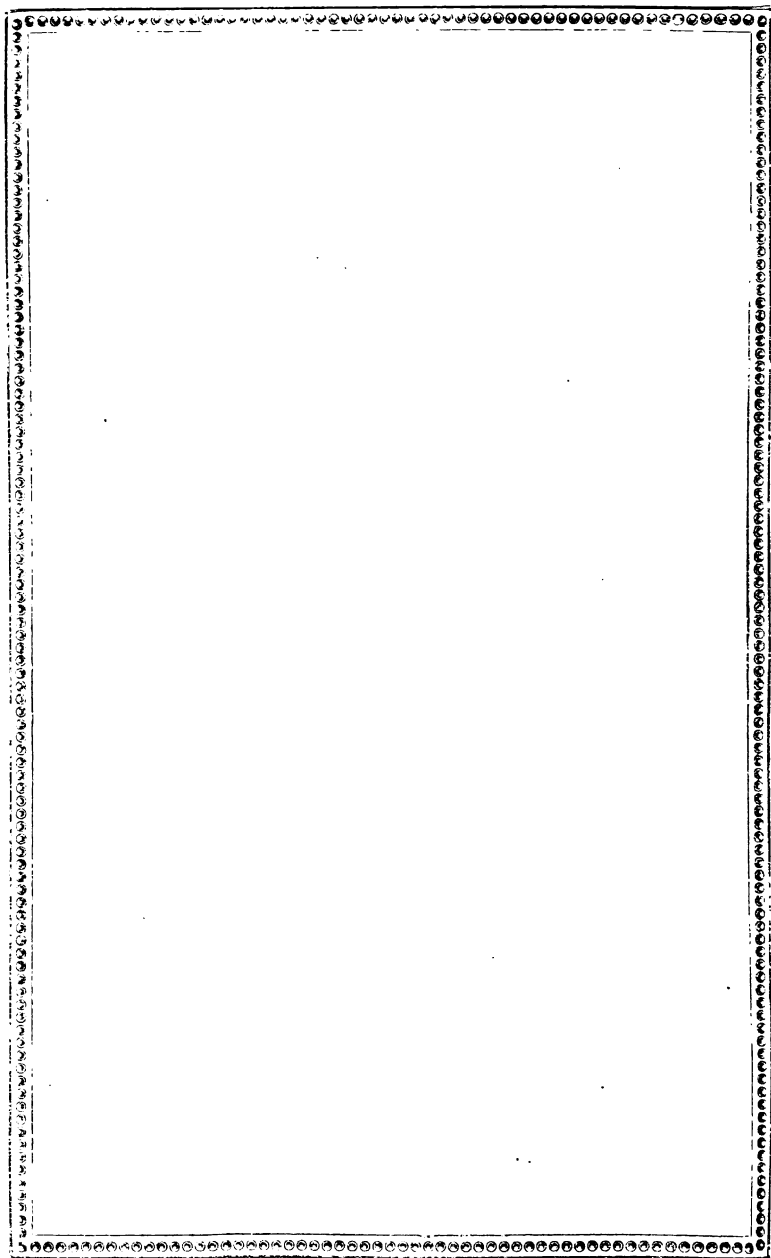
And thou bearest all their unisons in one full swell combined ;
 The restless pines, the moaning stream, all hidden things and free,
 Of the dim old sounding wilderness, have lent their soul to thee.

Thou art come from cities lighted up for the conqueror passing by,
 Thou art wafting from their streets a sound of haughty revelry ;
 The rolling of triumphant wheels, the harpings in the hall,
 The far-off shout of multitudes, are in thy rise and fall.

Thou art come from kingly tombs and shrines, from ancient minsters
 vast,
 Through the dark aisles of a thousand years thy lonely wing hath
 pass'd ;



"Ye that are born of the valleys deep,
With the water-flowers on your breast asleep." [p. 568.



Thou hast caught the anthem's billowy swell, the stately dirge's
tone,
For a chief, with sword, and shield, and helm, to his place of
slumber gone.

Thou art come from long-forsaken homes, wherein our young days
flew,
Thou hast found sweet voices lingering there, the loved, the kind,
the true ;
Thou callest back those melodies, though now all changed and
fled,—
Be still, be still, and haunt us not with music from the dead !

Are all these notes in *thee*, wild Wind ! these many notes in *thee* !
Far in our own unfathom'd souls their fount must surely be ;
Yes ! buried, but unsleeping, *there* Thought watches, Memory lies,
From whose deep urn the tones are pour'd through all Earth's
harmonies.

THE VIGIL OF ARMS.*

A SOUNDING step was heard by night
In a church where the mighty slept,
As a mail-clad youth, till morning's light,
Midst the tombs his vigil kept.
He walk'd in dreams of power and fame,
He lifted a proud, bright eye,
For the hours were few that withheld his name
From the roll of chivalry.

Down the moon-lit aisles he paced alone,
With a free and stately tread ;
And the floor gave back a muffled tone
From the couches of the dead :
The silent many that round him lay,
The crown'd and helm'd that were,
The haughty chiefs of the war-array—
Each in his sepulchre !

But no dim warning of time or fate
That youth's flush'd hopes could chill,
He moved through the trophies of buried state
With each proud pulse throbbing still.

* The candidate for knighthood was under the necessity of keeping watch the night before his inauguration, in a church, and completely armed. This was called "the Vigil of Arms."

He heard, as the wind through the chancel sung,
A swell of the trumpet's breath ;
He look'd to the banners on high that hung,
And not to the dust beneath.

And a royal masque of splendour seem'd
Before him to unfold ;
Through the solemn arches on it stream'd,
With many a gleam of gold :
There were crested knight, and gorgeous dame,
Glittering athwart the gloom,
And he follow'd, till his bold step came
To his warrior-father's tomb.

But there the still and shadowy might
Of the monumental stone,
And the holy sleep of the soft lamp's light,
That over its quiet shone,
And the image of that sire, who died
In his noonday of renown—
These had a power unto which the pride
Of fiery life bow'd down.

And a spirit from his early years
Came back o'er his thoughts to move,
Till his eye was fill'd with memory's tears,
And his heart with childhood's love !
And he look'd, with a change in his softening glance,
To the armour o'er the grave,—
For there they hung, the shield and lance,
And the gauntlet of the brave.

And the sword of many a field was there,
With its cross for the hour of need,
When the knight's bold war-cry hath sunk in prayer,
And the spear is a broken reed !—
Hush ! did a breeze through the armour sigh ?
Did the folds of the banner shake ?
Not so !—from the tomb's dark mystery
There seem'd a voice to break !

He had heard that voice bid clarions blow,
He had caught its last blessing's breath,—
'Twas the same—but its awful sweetness now
Had an under-tone of death !
And it said,—“ The sword hath conquer'd kings,
And the spear through realms hath pass'd ;
But the cross, alone, of all these things,
Might aid me at the last.”

THE HEART OF BRUCE IN MELROSE ABBEY.

HEART ! that didst press forward still,*
Where the trumpet's note rang shrill,
Where the knightly swords were crossing,
And the plumes like sea-foam tossing,
Leader of the charging spear,
Fiery heart !—and liest thou *here* ?
May this narrow spot inurn
Aught that so could beat and burn ?
Heart ! that lovedst the clarion's blast,
Silent is thy place at last ;
Silent,—save when early bird
Sings where once the mass was heard ;
Silent—save when breeze's moan
Comes through flowers or fretted stone ;
And the wild-rose waves around thee,
And the long dark grass hath bound thee,—
Sleep'st thou, as the swain might sleep,
In his nameless valley deep ?

No ! brave heart !—though cold and lone,
Kingly power is yet thine own !
Feel I not thy spirit brood
O'er the whispering solitude ;
Lo ! at one high thought of thee,
Fast they rise, the bold, the free,
Sweeping past thy lowly bed,
With a mute, yet stately tread.
Shedding their pale armour's light
Forth upon the breathless night,
Bending every warlike plume
In the prayer o'er saintly tomb.

Is the noble Douglas nigh,
Arm'd to follow thee, or die ?
Now, true heart, as thou wert wont,
Pass thou to the peril's front !
Where the banner-spear is gleaming,
And the battle's red wine streaming,

* "Now pass thou forward, as thou wert wont, and Douglas will follow thee or die !" With these words Douglas threw from him the heart of Bruce, into mid-battle against the Moors of Spain.

Nature's Farewell.

Till the Paynim quail before thee,
 Till the cross wave proudly o'er thee ;—
 Dreams ! the falling of a leaf
 Wins me from their splendours brief ;
 Dreams, yet bright ones ! scorn them not,
 Thou that seek'st the holy spot ;
 Nor, amidst its lone domain,
 Call the faith in relics vain !

NATURE'S FAREWELL.

"The beautiful is vanish'd, and returns not."

COLERIDGE'S *Wallenstein*.

A YOUTH rode forth from his childhood's home,
 Through the crowded paths of the world to roam,
 And the green leaves whisper'd, as he pass'd,
 "Wherefore, thou dreamer, away so fast ?

"Knew'st thou with what thou art parting here,
 Long wouldst thou linger in doubt and fear ;
 Thy heart's light laughter, thy sunny hours,
 Thou hast left in our shades with the spring's wild flowers.

"Under the arch by our mingling made,
 Thou and thy brother have gaily play'd ;
 Ye may meet again where ye roved of yore,
 But as ye *have* met there—oh ! never more !"

On rode the youth—and the boughs among,
 Thus the free birds o'er his pathway sung :
 "Wherefore so fast unto life away ?
 Thou art leaving for ever thy joy in our lay !

"Thou mayst come to the summer woods again,
 And thy heart have no echo to greet their strain ;
 Afar from the foliage its love will dwell—
 A change must pass o'er thee—farewell, farewell !"

On rode the youth :—and the founts and streams
 Thus mingled a voice with its joyous dreams :—
 "We have been thy playmates through many a day,
 Wherefore thus leave us ?—oh ! yet delay !

"Listen but once to the sound of our mirth!
For thee 'tis a melody passing from earth.
Never again wilt thou find in its flow,
The peace it could once on thy heart bestow.

"Thou wilt visit the scenes of thy childhood's glee,
With the breath of the world on thy spirit free;
Passion and sorrow its depth will have stirr'd,
And the singing of waters be vainly heard.

"Thou wilt bear in our gladsome laugh no part—
What should it do for a burning heart?
Thou wilt bring to the banks of our freshest rill,
Thirst which no fountain on earth may still.

"Farewell!—when thou comest again to thine own,
Thou wilt miss from our music its loveliest tone;
Mournfully true is the tale we tell—
Yet on, fiery dreamer! farewell! farewell!"

And a something of gloom on his spirit weigh'd,
As he caught the last sounds of his native shade;
But he knew not, till many a bright spell broke,
How deep were the oracles Nature spoke!

THE BEINGS OF THE MIND.

"THE beings of the mind are not of clay;
Essentially immortal, they create
And multiply in us a brighter ray,
And more beloved existence; that which Fate
Prohibits to dull life, in this our state
Of mortal bondage."

BYRON.

Come to me with your triumphs and your woes,
Ye forms, to life by glorious poets brought!
I sit alone with flowers, and vernal boughs,
In the deep shadow of a voiceless thought;
'Midst the glad music of the spring alone,
And sorrowful for visions that are gone!

Come to me! make your thrilling whispers heard
Ye, by those masters of the soul endow'd
With life, and love, and many a burning word,
That bursts from grief, like lightning from a cloud,
And smites the heart, till all its chords reply,
As leaves make answer when the wind sweeps by.

P P

Come to me ! visit my dim haunt !—the sound
Of hidden springs is in the grass beneath ;
The stock-dove's note above ; and all around,
The poesy that with the violet's breath
Floats through the air, in rich and sudden streams,
Mingling, like music, with the soul's deep dreams.

Friends, friends !—for such to my lone heart ye are—
Unchanging ones ! from whose immortal eyes
The glory melts not as a waning star,
And the sweet kindness never, never dies ;
Bright children of the bard ! o'er this green dell
Pass once again, and light it with your spell !

Imogen ! fair Fidele ! meekly blending
In patient grief, " a smiling with a sigh ;" *
And thou, Cordelia ! faithful daughter, tending
That sire, an outcast to the bitter sky ;
Thou of the soft low voice !—thou art not gone !
Still breathes for me its faint and flute-like tone.

And come to me !—sing me thy willow-strain,
Sweet Desdemona ! with the sad surprise
In thy beseeching glance, where still, though vain,
Undimm'd, unquenchable affection lies ;
Come, bowing thy young head to wrong and scorn,
As a frail hyacinth, by showers o'erborne.

And thou, too, fair Ophelia ! flowers are here,
That well might win thy footstep to the spot—
Pale cowslips, meet for maiden's early bier,
And pansies for sad thoughts, †—but needed not !
Come with thy wreaths, and all the love and light
In that wild eye still tremulously bright.

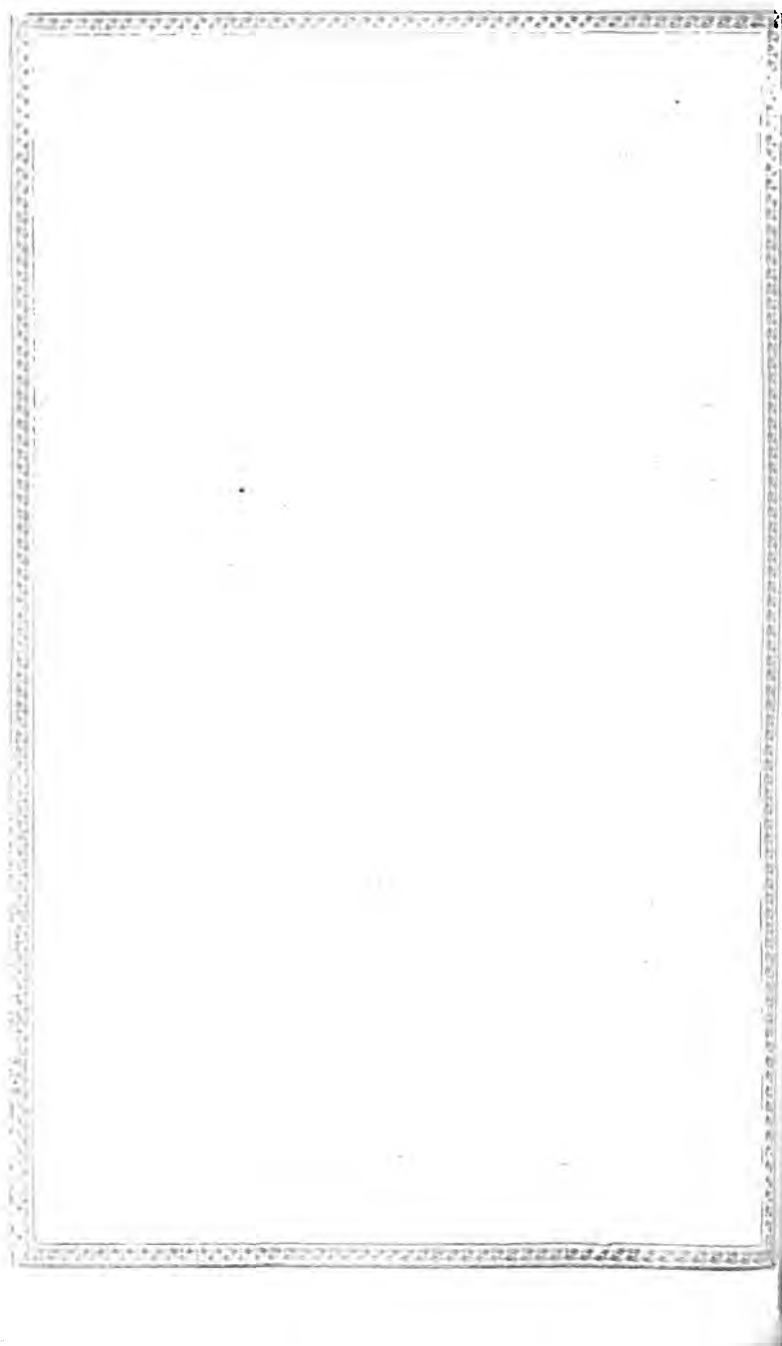
And Juliet, vision of the south ! enshrining
All gifts that unto its rich heaven belong ;
The glow, the sweetness, in its rose combining,
The soul its nightingales pour forth in song !
Thou, making death deep joy !—but *couldst* thou die ?
No !—thy young love hath immortality !

* " Nobly he yokes
A smiling with a sigh."—*Cymbeline*.

† " Here's pansies for you—that's for thoughts."—*Hamlet*.



"A youth rode forth from his childhood's home." [p. 576.]



From earth's bright faces fades the light of morn,
From earth's glad voices drops the joyous tone;
But ye, the children of the soul, were born
Deathless, and for undying love alone;
And, O ye beautiful! 'tis well, how well,
In the soul's world, with you, where change is not, to dwell

THE LYRE'S LAMENT.

A LARGE lyre hung in an opening of the rock, and gave forth its melancholy music to the wind—but no human being was to be seen.”—*Salathiel*.

A DEEP-TONED Lyre hung murmuring
To the wild wind of the sea:
“O melancholy wind,” it sigh’d,
“What would thy breath with me?

“Thou canst not wake the spirit
That in me slumbering lies,
Thou strikest not forth th’ electric fire
Of buried melodies.

“Wind of the dark sea-waters!
Thou dost but sweep my strings
Into wild gusts of mournfulness,
With the rushing of thy wings.

“But the spell—the gift—the lightning—
Within my frame conceal’d,
Must I moulder on the rock away,
With their triumphs unreveal’d?

“I have power, high power, for freedom
To wake the burning soul!
I have sounds that through the ancient hills
Like a torrent’s voice might roll.

“I have peeling notes of victory
That might welcome kings from war;
I have rich deep tones to send the wail
For a hero’s death afar.

“I have chords to lift the pæan
From the temple to the sky,
Full as the forest-unions
When sweeping winds are high.

"And Love—for Love's lone sorrow
I have accents that might swell
Through the summer air with the rose's breath,
Or the violet's faint farewell:

"Soft—spiritual—mournful—
Sighs in each note enshrined—
But who shall call that sweetness forth?
Thou canst not, ocean-wind!

"I pass without my glory,
Forgotten I decay—
Where is the touch to give me life?—
Wild, fitful wind, away!"

So sigh'd the broken music
That in gladness had no part—
How like art thou, neglected Lyre,
To many a human heart!

TASSO'S CORONATION.*

A CROWN of victory! a triumphal song!
Oh! call some friend, upon whose pitying heart
The weary one may calmly sink to rest:
Let some kind voice, beside his lowly couch,
Pour the last prayer for mortal agony!

A TRUMPET'S note is in the sky, in the glorious Roman sky,
Whose dome hath rung, so many an age, to the voice of victory;
There is crowding to the capitol, the imperial streets along,
For again a conqueror must be crown'd,—a kingly child of song:

Yet his chariot lingers,
Yet around his home
Broods a shadow silently,
'Midst the joy of Rome.

A thousand thousand laurel boughs are waving wide and far,
To shed out their triumphal gleams around his rolling car;
A thousand haunts of olden gods have given their wealth of flowers,
To scatter o'er his path of fame bright hues in gem-like showers.

* Tasso died at Rome on the day before that appointed for his Coronation in the Capitol.

Peace ! within his chamber
Low the mighty lies ;
With a cloud of dreams on his noble brow,
And a wandering in his eyes.

Sing, sing for him, the lord of song, for him, whose rushing strain
In mastery o'er the spirit sweeps, like a strong wind o'er the main !
Whose voice lives deep in burning hearts, for ever there to dwell,
As full-toned oracles are shrined in a temple's holiest cell.

Yes ! for him, the victor,
Sing,—but low, sing low !
A soft sad *miserere* chant
For a soul about to go !

The sun, the sun of Italy is pouring o'er his way,
Where the old three hundred triumphs moved, a flood of golden day:
Streaming through every haughty arch of the Cæsars' past renown—
Bring forth, in that exulting light, the conqueror for his crown !

Shut the proud bright sunshine
From the fading sight !
There needs no ray by the bed of death,
Save the holy taper's light.

The wreath is twined,—the way is strewn—the lordly train are met—
The streets are hung with coronals—why stays the minstrel yet ?
Shout ! as an army shouts in joy around a royal chief—
Bring forth the bard of chivalry, the bard of love and grief !

Silence ! forth we bring him,
In his last array ;
From love and grief the freed, the flown—
Way for the bier—make way !

THE BETTER LAND.

" I HEAR thee speak of the better land,
Thou callest its children a happy band ;
Mother ! oh, where is that radiant shore ?
Shall we not seek it, and weep no more ?
Is it where the flower of the orange blows,
And the fire-flies glance through the myrtle boughs ?"—
" Not there, not there, my child !"

The Wounded Eagle.

"Is it where the feathery palm-trees rise,
And the date grows ripe under sunny skies?
Or 'midst the green islands of glittering seas,
Where fragrant forests perfume the breeze,
And strange, bright birds, on their starry wings,
Bear the rich hues of all glorious things?"—
"Not there, not there, my child!"

"Is it far away, in some region old,
Where the rivers wander o'er sands of gold?—
Where the burning rays of the ruby shine,
And the diamond lights up the secret mine,
And the pearl gleams forth from the coral strand?—
Is it there, sweet mother, that better land?"—
"Not there, not there, my child!"

"Eye hath not seen it, my gentle boy!
Ear hath not heard its deep songs of joy;
Dreams cannot picture a world so fair—
Sorrow and death may not enter there;
Time doth not breathe on its fadeless bloom,
For beyond the clouds, and beyond the tomb,—
"It is there, it is there, my child!"

THE WOUNDED EAGLE.

EAGLE! this is not thy sphere!
Warrior bird! what seek'st thou here?
Wherefore by the fountain's brink
Doth thy royal pinion sink?
Wherefore on the violet's bed
Lay'st thou thus thy drooping head?
Thou, that hold'st the blast in scorn,
Thou, that wear'st the wings of morn!

Eagle! wilt thou not arise?
Look upon thine own bright skies!
Lift thy glance! the fiery sun
There his pride of place hath won!
And the mountain lark is there,
And sweet sound hath fill'd the air;
Hast thou left that realm on high?—
Oh! it can be but to die!

Eagle, Eagle ! thou hast bow'd
From thine empire o'er the cloud !
Thou, that hadst ethereal birth,
Thou hast stoop'd too near the earth,
And the hunter's shaft hath found thee,
And the toils of death have bound thee !—
Wherefore didst thou leave thy place,
Creature of a kingly race ?

Wert thou weary of thy throne ?
Was thy sky's dominion lone ?
Chill and lone it well might be,
Yet that mighty wing was free !
Now the chain is o'er it cast,
From thy heart the blood flows fast,—
Woe for gifted souls and high !
Is not such *their* destiny ?

SADNESS AND MIRTH.

"NAY, these wild fits of uncurb'd laughter
Athwart the gloomy tenor of your mind,
As it has lower'd of late, so keenly cast,
Unsuited seem, and strange.

Oh ! nothing strange !
Didst thou ne'er see the swallow's veering breast,
Winging the air beneath some murky cloud,
In the sunn'd glimpses of a troubled day,
Shiver in silvery brightness ?
Or boatman's oar, 's vivid lightning flash
In the faint gleam, that like a spirit's path,
Tracks the still waters of some sullen lake ?

Oh, gentle friend !
Chide not *her* mirth, who yesterday was sad,
And may be so to-morrow !"

JOANNA BAILLIE.

YE met at the stately feasts of old,
Where the bright wine foam'd over sculptured gold,
Sadness and Mirth !—ye were mingled there
With the sound of the lyre in the scented air ;
As the cloud and the lightning are blent on high,
Ye mix'd in the gorgeous revelry.

For there hung o'er those banquets of yore a gloom,
A thought and a shadow of the tomb ;

It gave to the flute-notes an under-tone,
To the rose a colouring not its own,
To the breath of the myrtle a mournful power—
Sadness and Mirth! ye had each your dower!

Ye met when the triumph swept proudly by,
With the Roman eagles through the sky!
I know that e'en then, in his hour of pride,
The soul of the mighty within him died;
That a void in his bosom lay darkly still,
Which the music of victory might never fill.

Thou wert there, O Mirth! swelling on the shout,
Till the temples, like echo-caves, rang out;
Thine were the garlands, the songs, the wine,
All the rich voices in air were thine,
The incense, the sunshine—but, Sadness! *thy* part,
Deepest of all, was the victor's heart!

Ye meet at the bridal with flower and tear;
Strangely and wildly ye meet by the bier!
As the gleam from a sea-bird's white wing shed,
Crosses the storm in its path of dread;
As a dirge meets the breeze of a summer sky—
Sadness and Mirth! so ye come and fly!

Ye meet in the poet's haunted breast,
Darkness and rainbow, alike its guest!
When the breath of the violet is out in spring,
When the woods with the wakening of music ring,
O'er his dreamy spirit your currents pass,
Like shadow and sunlight o'er mountain grass.

When will your parting be, Sadness and Mirth?
Bright stream and dark one!—oh! never on earth:
Never while triumphs and tombs are so near,
While Death and Love walk the same dim sphere,
While flowers unfold where the storm may sweep,
While the heart of man is a soundless deep!

But there smiles a land, O ye troubled pair!
Where ye have no part in the summer air.
Far from the breathings of changeeful skies,
Over the seas and the graves it lies;
Where the day of the lightning and cloud is done,
And joy reigns alone, as the lonely sun!

THE NIGHTINGALE'S DEATH-SONG.

"WILLST du nach den Nachtigallen fragen,
Die mit seelenvollen melodie
Dich entzückten in des Lenzes Tagen?—
Nur so lang sie liebten, waren sie."

SCHILLER.

MOURNFULLY, sing mournfully,
And die away, my heart !
The rose, the glorious rose is gone,
And I, too, will depart.

The skies have lost their splendour,
The waters changed their tone,
And wherefore, in the faded world,
Should music linger on ?

Where is the golden sunshine,
And where the flower-cup's glow ?
And where the joy of the dancing leaves,
And the fountain's laughing flow ?

A voice, in every whisper
Of the wave, the bough, the air,
Comes asking for the beautiful,
And moaning, "Where, oh ! where ?"

Tell of the brightness parted,
Thou bee, thou lamb at play !
Thou lark, in thy victorious mirth !—
Are ye, too, pass'd away ?

Mournfully, sing mournfully !
The royal rose is gone.
Melt from the woods, my spirit, melt
In one deep farewell tone !

Not so !—swell forth triumphantly,
The full, rich, fervent strain !
Hence with young love and life I go,
In the summer's joyous train.

With sunshine, with sweet odour,
With every precious thing,
Upon the last warm southern breeze
My soul its flight shall wing.

The Diver.

Alone I shall not linger,
When the days of hope are past,
To watch the fall of leaf by leaf,
To wait the rushing blast.

Triumphantly, triumphantly !
Sing to the woods, I go !
For me, perchance, in other lands,
The glorious rose may blow.

The sky's transparent azure,
And the greensward's violet breath,
And the dance of light leaves in the wind,
May there know nought of death.

No more, no more sing mournfully !
Swell high, then break, my heart
With love, the spirit of the woods,
With summer I depart !

THE DIVER.

"THEY learn in suffering what they teach in song."—SHELLEY.

THOU hast been where the rocks of coral grow,
Thou hast fought with eddying waves ;—
Thy cheek is pale, and thy heart beats low,
Thou searcher of ocean's caves !

Thou hast look'd on the gleaming wealth of old,
And wrecks where the brave have striven ;
The deep is a strong and a fearful hold,
But thou its bar hast riven !

A wild and weary life is thine ;
A wasting task and lone,
Though treasure-grots for thee may shine,
To all besides unknown !

A weary life ! but a swift decay
Soon, soon shall set thee free ;
Thou'rt passing fast from thy toils away,
Thou wrestler with the sea !

In thy dim eye, on thy hollow cheek,
Well arc the death-signs read—
Go ! for the pearl in its cavern seek,
Ere hope and power be fled !

And bright in beauty's coronal
That glistening gem shall be ;
A star to all in the festive hall—
But who will think on *thee* !

None ! as it gleams from the queen-like head,
Not one 'midst throngs will say,
"A life hath been like a rain-drop shed,
For that pale quivering ray."

Woe for the wealth thus dearly bought !—
And are not those like thee,
Who win for earth the gems of thought ?
O wrestler with the sea !

Down to the gulfs of the soul they go,
Where the passion-fountains burn,
Gathering the jewels far below
From many a buried urn :

Wringing from lava-veins the fire,
That o'er bright words is pour'd !
Learning deep sounds, to make the lyre
A spirit in each chord.

But, oh ! the price of bitter tears,
Paid for the lonely power
That throws at last, o'er desert years,
A darkly-glorious dower !

Like flower-seeds, by the wild wind spread,
So radiant thoughts are strew'd ;—
The soul whence those high gifts are shed,
May faint in solitude !

And who will think, when the strain is sung,
Till a thousand hearts are stirr'd,
What life-drops, from the minstrel wrung,
Have gush'd with every word ?

None, none !—his treasures live like thine,
He strives and dies like *thee* ;—
Thou, that hast been to the pearl's dark shrine,
O wrestler with the sea !

THE REQUIEM OF GENIUS.

"Les poètes dont l'imagination tient à la puissance d'aimer et de souffrir, ne sont-ils pas les bannis d'une autre région?"—MADAME DE STAEL, *De L'Allemagne*.

No tears for thee!—though light be from us gone
With thy soul's radiance, bright, yet restless one!

No tears for thee!
They that have loved an exile, must not mourn
To see him parting for his native bourne
O'er the dark sea.

All the high music of thy spirit here,
Breathed but the language of another sphere,
Unechoed round;
And strange, though sweet, as 'midst our weeping skies
Some half-remember'd strain of paradise
Might sadly sound.

Hast thou been answer'd?—thou, that from the night
And from the voices of the tempest's might,
And from the past,
Wert seeking still some oracle's reply,
To pour the secrets of man's destiny
Forth on the blast!

Hast thou been answer'd?—thou, that through the gloom,
And shadow, and stern silence of the tomb,
A cry didst send,
So passionate and deep? to pierce, to move,
To win back token of unburied love
From buried friend!

And hast thou found where living waters burst?
Thou, that didst pine amidst us, in the thirst
Of fever-dreams!
Are the true fountains thine for evermore?
Oh! lured so long by shining mists, that wore
The light of streams!

Speak! is it well with thee?—We call, as *thou*,
With thy lit eye, deep voice, and kindled brow,
Wert wont to call
On the departed! Art thou blest and free?—
Alas! the lips earth covers, even to *thee*,
Were silent all!

Yet shall our hope rise fann'd by quenchless faith,
As a flame, foster'd by some warm wind's breath,
In light upsprings :
Freed soul of song ! yes, thou hast found the sought;
Borne to thy home of beauty and of thought,
On morning's wings.

And we will dream it is *thy* joy we hear,
When life's young music, ringing far and clear,
O'erflows the sky :—
No tears for *thee* ! the lingering gloom is ours—
Thou art for converse with all glorious powers,
Never to die !

— --
TRIUMPHANT MUSIC.

"TACETE, tacete, O suoni trionfanti !
Risvegliate in vano 'l cor che non può liberarsi."

WHEREFORE and whither bear'st thou up my spirit,
On eagle wings, through every plume that thrill ?
It hath no crown of victory to inherit—
Be still, triumphant harmony ! be still !

Thine are no sounds for earth, thus proudly swelling
Into rich floods of joy :—it is but pain
To mount so high, yet find on high no dwelling,
To sink so fast, so heavily again !

No sounds for earth ?—Yes, to young chieftain dying
On his own battle-field, at set of sun,
With his freed country's banner o'er him flying,
Well mightst thou speak of fame's high garner won.

No sounds for earth ?—Yes, for the martyr leading
Unto victorious death serenely on,
For patriot by his rescued altars bleeding,
Thou hast a voice in each majestic tone.

But speak not thus to one whose heart is beating
Against life's narrow bound, in conflict vain !
For power, for joy, high hope, and rapturous greeting,
Thou wak'st lone thirst—be hush'd, exulting strain

Second Sight.

Be hush'd, or breathe of grief !—of exile yearnings
 Under the willows of the stranger-shore ;
 Breathe of the soul's untold and restless burnings,
 For looks, tones, footsteps, that return no more.

Breathe of deep love—a lonely vigil keeping
 Through the night-hours, o'er wasted wealth to pine ;
 Rich thoughts and sad, like faded rose-leaves heaping,
 In the shut heart, at once a tomb and shrine.

Or pass as if thy spirit-notes came sighing
 From worlds beneath some blue Elysian sky ;
 Breathe of repose, the pure, the bright, th' undying—
 Of joy no more—bewildering harmony !

SECOND SIGHT.

"NE'ER err'd the prophet heart that grief inspired,
 Though joy's illusions mock their votarist." MATURIN.

A MOURNFUL gift is mine, O friends !
 A mournful gift is mine !
 A murmur of the soul which blends
 With the flow of song and wine.

An eye that through the triumph's hour,
 Beholds the coming woe,
 And dwells upon the faded flower
 'Midst the rich summer's glow.

Ye smile to view fair faces bloom
 Where the father's board is spread ;
 I see the stillness and the gloom
 Of a home whence all are fled.

I see the wither'd garlands lie
 Forsaken on the earth,
 While the lamps yet burn, and the dancers fly
 Through the ringing hall of mirth.

I see the blood-red future stain
 On the warrior's gorgeous crest ;
 And the bier amidst the bridal train
 When they come with roses drest.

I hear the still small moan of Time,
Through the ivy branches made,
Where the palace, in its glory's prime,
With the sunshine stands array'd.

The thunder of the seas I hear,
The shriek along the wave,
When the bark sweeps forth, and song and cheer
Salute the parting brave.

With every breeze a spirit sends
To me some warning sign :—
A mournful gift is mine, O friends !
A mournful gift is mine !

Oh ! prophet heart ! thy grief, thy power,
To all deep souls belong ;
The shadow in the sunny hour,
The wail in the mirthful song.

Their sight is all too sadly clear—
For them a veil is riven :
Their piercing thoughts repose not here,
Their home is but in Heaven.

THE SEA-BIRD FLYING INLAND.

"Thy path is not as mine :—where thou art blest,
My spirit would but wither : mine own grief
Is in mine eyes a richer, holier thing,
Than all thy happiness."

HATH the summer's breath, on the south wind borne,
Met the dark seas in their sweeping scorn ?
Hath it lured thee, Bird ! from their sounding caves,
To the river-shores, where the osier waves ?

Or art thou come on the hills to dwell,
Where the sweet-voiced echoes have many a cell ?
Where the moss bears print of the wild-deer's tread,
And the heath like a royal robe is spread ?

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Thou hast done well, O thou bright sea-bird !
 There is joy where the song of the lark is heard,
 With the dancing of waters through copse and dell,
 And the bee's low tune in the fox-glove's bell.

Thou hast done well :—Oh ! the seas are lone,
 And the voice they send up hath a mournful tone ;
 A mingling of dirges and wild farewells,
 Fitfully breathed through its anthem-swells.

The proud bird rose as the words were said—
 The rush of his pinion swept o'er my head,
 And the glance of his eye, in its bright disdain,
 Spoke him a child of the haughty main.

He hath flown from the woods to the ocean's breast,
 To his throne of pride on the billow's crest !—
 Oh ! who shall say, to a spirit free,
 “ *There* lies the pathway of bliss for thee ? ”

THE SLEEPER.

“ FOR sleep is awful.”—BYRON.

Oh ! lightly, lightly tread !
 A holy thing is sleep,
 On the worn spirit shed,
 And eyes that wake to weep

A holy thing from Heaven,
 A gracious dewy cloud,
 A covering mantle given
 The weary to enshroud.

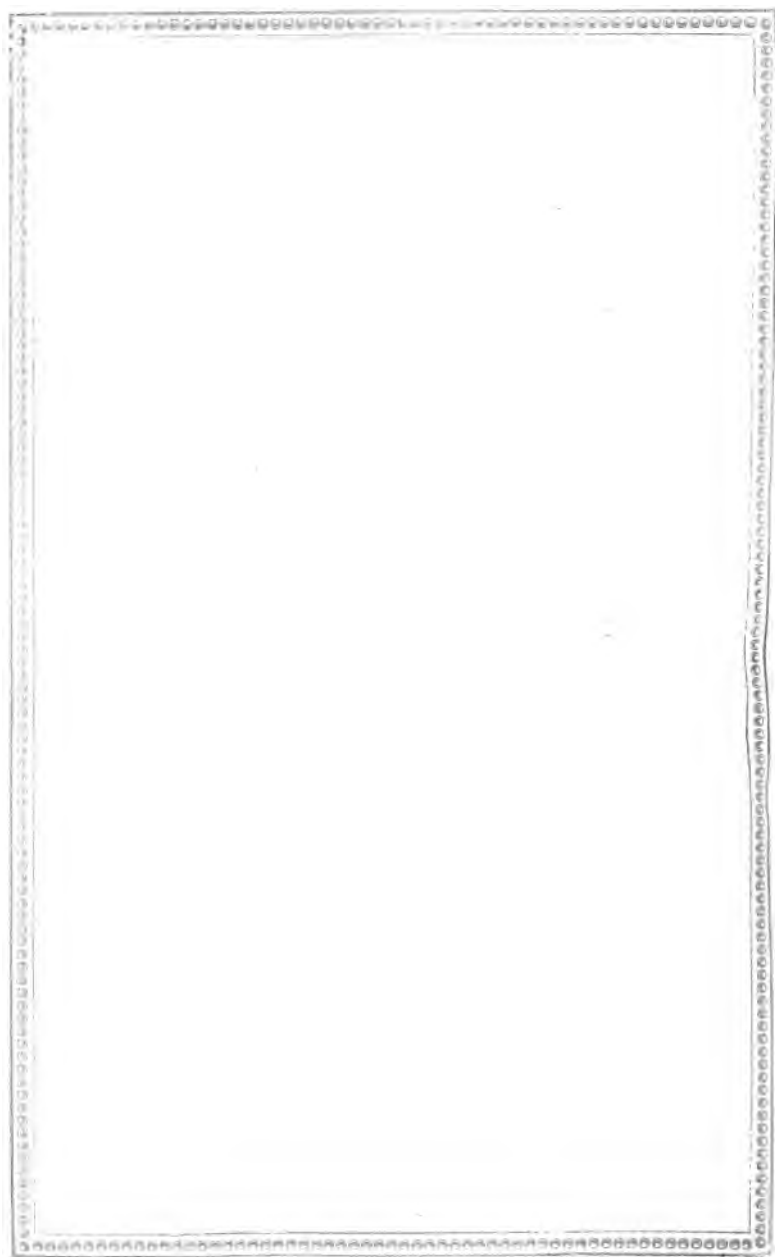
Oh ! lightly, lightly tread !
 Revere the pale still brow,
 The meekly-drooping head,
 The long hair's willowy flow.

Ye know not what ye do,
 That call the slumberer back,
 From the world unseen by you
 Unto life's dim faded track.



"Her soul is far away—
In her childhood's land, perchance."

[P. 597.]



Her soul is far away,
In her childhood's land, perchance,
Where her young sisters play,
Where shines her mother's glance.

Some old sweet native sound
Her spirit haply weaves ;
A harmony profound
Of woods with all their leaves ;

A murmur of the sea,
A laughing tone of streams :—
Long may her sojourn be
In the music-land of dreams !

Each voice of love is there,
Each gleam of beauty fled,
Each lost one still more fair—
Oh ! lightly, lightly tread !

THE MIRROR IN THE DESERTED HALL.

O DIM, forsaken mirror !
How many a stately throng
Hath o'er thee gleam'd, in vanish'd hours
Of the wine-cup and the song !

The song hath left no echo ;
The bright wine hath been quaff'd,
And hush'd is every silvery voice
That lightly here hath laugh'd.

O mirror, lonely mirror,
Thou of the silent hall !
Thou hast been flush'd with beauty's bloom—
Is this, too, vanish'd all ?

It is, with the scatter'd garlands
Of triumphs long ago ;
With the melodies of buried lyres ;
With the faded rainbow's glow.

The Mirror in the Deserted Hall.

And for all the gorgeous pageants,
For the glance of gem and plume,
For lamp, and harp, and rosy wreath,
And vase of rich perfume.

Now, dim, forsaken mirror,
Thou givest but faintly back
The quiet stars, and the sailing moon,
On her solitary track.

And thus with man's proud spirit
Thou tellest me 'twill be,
When the forms and hues of this world fade
From his memory, as from thee :

And his heart's long-troubled waters
At last in stillness lie,
Reflecting but the images
Of the solemn world on high.



